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THE LAWFULNESS OF Infant-BAPTISM PROVED FROM *SCRIPTURE*;

WITH

The RIGHT that the INFANTS of *Christian Parents* have to be Baptiz'd.

Wherein also,

Mr. *Gale*'s *Reflections* on Mr. *Wall*'s *History of* INFANT-BAPTISM, are Examin'd and Refuted, so far as they came in the Way of this *Discourse*.

And all the *Objections* and *Arguments* of other *Anti-pædobaptists*, that are of any Weight, are taken off.

Quicunque negat parvulos per Baptismum Christi à perditione liberari, & salutem percipere sempiternam, Anathema sit. Conc. *Carthag.* 5. ubi præsedit D. *Augustinus.*

By RICHARD OWEN, Vicar of *Iford*, in *Sussex*.

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PREFACE.

WHEN *I compos'd this Piece, I knew not that Mr.* Wall *design'd a Defence against Mr.* Gale's *Reflections, nor have I seen it hitherto. But hearing it was out, I consulted with some of my Learned and Reverend Brethren, who had perus'd both it, and my Manuscript. And putting the Question, Whether his Defence had not superseded the Necessity or Usefulness of printing this Piece? I was answered in the Negative. Beside; I knew, that if he kept close to his former Subject, which was to vindicate the Historical Account and primitive Practice of* Pædobaptism, *from the ancient Monuments of the Church, my Undertaking could no ways interfere with his, but might come in as a proper Supplement. And this shall be all my Apology for its Publication.*

Could Confidence carry the Cause for our Antagonists, they are Masters at it, and have that Property to Perfection. Seldom has it failed to accompany

inveterate Error, when form'd into Principle, and confirm'd by Practice. Surprizing it is to see with what an Air of Scorn and Contempt they treat all Pædobaptist *Writers, and how definitively they advance their own Notions; as if absolute Certainty, and Infallibility itself, was on their side. In the Management of this Controversy, they have shaken Hands with Modesty, and seem to have struck it out from the List of Vertues. And, in all their Books that I have read, they appear to have taken special Care to free this Censure from all Suspicion of Injustice, or Uncharitableness.*

I suppose, Mr. Gale *is allowed to be one of the ablest Champions that has taken up the Cudgels for the* Baptists. *He fairly puts in for his share of Assurance, and scarce comes behind any of his Brethren. Victory is always in his Hand, and with her Laurels he crowns his Temples, when he marches in Triumph over his trifling Adversaries. But what great Reason he has for this Conduct, I hope the Reader will, in good measure, be apprized by the following Discourse. To note all his Miscarriages I do not pretend; but I shall here crave leave to animadvert on a few Passages, that came not in my way conveniently elsewhere.*

His Candor and Ingenuity we justly require, when he confounds a considerable Number of our Church-men with profess'd Non-Jurors, *and asperses them with a strong Affection unto Popery.* "*Too* "*great a part of the Clergy, 'tis notorious, are either* "*open non-juring* Jacobites, *or secret, and, there-*"*fore, more mischievous,* High-flyers; *intirely* "*in the Pretender's Interest, and as hearty Friends* "*to Popish Tyranny and Superstition, as ever was*

the

" *the* Laudean *Faction. What a Number is there of*
" *'em, who glory in being call'd* High-Church-
" Men, *and carefully keep up the Distinction, not-*
" *withstanding the Queen and Parliament have*
" *often declar'd such to be dangerous Enemies to*
" *Church and State?* " Let. 2. p. 51, 52.

Can this be fair Dealing, when he knew Non-Jurors *had separated themselves from our Church, for the most part, and were no more of our Communion, than his own Sectaries; and some of 'em have since wrote professedly against our Constitution, to justify their Secession from us, not only for Political, but Ecclesiastical Reasons? How then are they to be reputed among the Body of our Clergy, or of the same Church with the* High-flyers *he mentions? Would his Friend Mr.* Stennett *pardon this jumbling of distinct Parties together in Mr.* Russen? *By no means will that Author stand accountable for the wild Opinions and enormous Actions of several Sects that shrouded their Heads under the general Name of* Baptists, *or* Antipædobaptists. *Yet will Mr.* Gale *make* Jacobites, *and* High-Church-men, *who have wholly divided Communions, march in the same Column. The Charge of being Friends to Tyranny, and Popishly affected, deserves to be slighted, as the stale Crimination of Men who judge the Heart, contrary to clear Facts and Demonstrations. And, if they think it consistent with the Apostle's Rules of Charity,* 1 Cor. xiii. *let 'em applaud themselves in their Christian Practice. But if the* High-flyers *be dangerous Enemies to Church and State, for keeping up a certain Distinction, both Church and State are very unhappy for having few or no Friends. For, all their Opponents are at one End of that Di-*

ſtinction, and contribute their part to the keeping of it up.

His Reflections begin with an Arraignment of Heats, Animoſities, and the Exceſſes of Paſſion, which ſome body or other entertain'd him with concerning the preſent Controverſy. What Language and Temper his Correſpondent expreſs'd, is to me unknown. But if he would have us to be unconcern'd at the Uſage we receive, and to handle him with all imaginable Tenderneſs and good Affection, it is ſuch a reaſonable Requeſt as the Danites *was to* Micah, Judg. xviii. 23. What aileth thee? *ſay they. To whom the injur'd Man replied*; Ye have taken away my Gods, and my Prieſt, and what have I more? and what is this that ye ſay unto me, What aileth thee? *He had* only *loſt all his Accommodations for Religion by their rapacious Hands*; *and why ſhould he be diſturb'd at ſuch a trifling Loſs? Much alike is our Caſe. For all* Pædobaptiſts *throughout the World, are* only *un-church'd by the charitable Mr.* Gale *and his Party. No Ordinations, no Miniſters, no Sacraments, no Church, or Church-memberſhip does he leave us*, Let. 2. p. 77, 80, 81. *Our Church is clean gone, without any Reſerve*; *tho' at the reſt he ſeems to boggle in this ſmooth and elegant Style: "Tho' we do not aſſert ſo much, yet, to ſome, it "will, it may be, ſeem a little probable, that ſhe may, "perhaps, have no Biſhops, Presbyters,* &c. *no law-"ful Ordinations*; *and* (*if this ſhould be allowed*) "*neither of the Sacraments can be duly admini-"ſtred.*" *But extremely impertinent is this Caution. For if, as he ſays elſewhere, our Church be like other Societies, then 'tis as vain to ſeek for a Mini-*

ſtry,

ſtry, Ordinations and Sacraments where there is no Church, as it would be to ſeek for Magiſtrates, Officers, Law, and Juſtice in Great Britain, *in caſe there was no Government nor Body Politic there. This ſtrikes deep at our Chriſtianity. And* Heathens, *his Brother Mr.* Canne *calls us, in plain Terms,* Epiſt. *to Coll.* Overton, *Governor of* Hull. *What aileth us now, that we cry after him? Why are we not wonderful calm and kind to theſe Diſſenting Brethren, and give up ſuch cheap Things, as our Church, Miniſtry,* &c. *for Peace and Civilities ſake? This Thanks has the Government, to be quite un-church'd, for its gracious Indulgence! and all* Pædobaptiſt *Diſſenters muſt look to themſelves no leſs than we.*

His Hand being in at this un-churching Work, he does, in effect, the ſame Service to the Jews *in our Saviour's Time;* " *when they had introduc'd ſuch* " *Abundance of Innovations in their Religion, as* " *to deſtroy its Eſſence.* " Let. 4. p. 154. *If its Eſſence was deſtroy'd, its very Being was loſt. Then no Religion, no Church; and if neither Church nor Religion, with what did Chriſt and his Apoſtles communicate, when they joyn'd with the* Jews *both in the Temple and Synagogue Worſhip?* THEY *did it; but in vain ſhall we expect Mr.* Gale's *Party to be ſo eaſy and obſequious towards our Church, whether it has loſt its Eſſence, or not.*

Again, we are told; " *Tho' it ſhould be granted,* " *the Church of* England, *like all other Societies,* " *has Power over her own Body; yet, ſhe has cer-* " *tainly none over thoſe that withdraw from her* " *Communion.* " *And a little lower;* " *The Diſ-* " *ſenters, by being out of her Body, are meerly, on* " *that Account, out of her Power.* " *Into the*

Merits of the Cauſe we muſt not examine, but the bare Act of Withdrawing, without any Conſideration of Right, is ſufficient. Then, if in this reſpect all other Societies are like our Church, and our Church like them, the King's Subjects need but withdraw from his Allegiance, and form themſelves into little ſeparate Bodies, in Cities, Towns, and Country Villages too, as Diſſenters have acted towards our Church, and they are, meerly on that Account, out of the Civil Body, and, certainly, out of its Power. So the Preſton *Gentlemen withdrew, and were executed, not for Rebels, but for Fools; becauſe they knew not how to plead their own Privilege. Precarious indeed are all Governments, if they have no other Cement to faſten them together, beſide the Good-Will and Humours of the People! And the State has as much Cauſe to thank our Author for his Politics, as the Church for his Divinity.*

This ſhall ſuffice, at preſent, for a Taſte of Mr. Gale's *Skill and Accuracy in managing Points of Controverſy. More will follow in the proper Places.*

Into this Tract I had once inſerted various Strictures on Mr. Benj. Keach, *a noted* Polemical *Writer of the* Baptiſts; *but, upon better Advice, ſtruck moſt of 'em out, as not deſerving any Regard. So full of Fooleries and Self-contradictions is that Author, that the Man would but greatly diſparage himſelf, who ſhould loſe Time and Pains in his Refutation.*

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THE LAWFULNESS OF Infant-BAPTISM, Proved from SCRIPTURE.

PART I.

IT is well known, that we have Two principal Controverſies in Debate with that Sect of Diſſenters, who call themſelves by the Name of *Baptiſts*. One concerns the Lawfulneſs of Baptizing the Infants of believing Parents; by whom I always mean Profeſs'd Believers. This we aſſert, and they deny, which diſtinguiſhes us into *Pædobaptiſts* and *Antipædobaptiſts*. The other relates to the Manner of Baptizing; whether it muſt be by Immerſion, or Dipping the Perſons under Water, as they maintain; or, whether Affuſion, or pouring Water upon the Face, may be ſufficient, as we do hold. But why this ſhould be made an irreconcileable Diſpute, or at leaſt a Ground of Separation from us, I am not ſatisfied; unleſs it be,

be, that they look upon us to be no True Church, nor to have a True Miniſtry that can lawfully officiate in the Divine Service. Otherwiſe, if they would come to us for Baptiſm, in this particular, they might be gratified. Becauſe our Church commands Dipping upon Condition, and, conſequently, prefers it to any other Mode of Adminiſtration. And Mr. *Gale* affirms, it was in Uſe among us after the Reformation, 'till in Queen *Elizabeth*'s Days it receiv'd a Change. However this be, the ſole Province I ſhall undertake to manage, is, To juſtifie the Lawfulneſs of Baptizing Infants, and the Right they have to that Ordinance; which I ſhall endeavour to do by Scripture Evidences; an Attempt, it ſeems, that will be ſtrange and ſurprizing to our Adverſaries. For Mr. *Gale* obſerves of Mr. *Dorrington*; "That Author affects "Wonders, and his whole Book is one, in which "he undertakes to prove Infant-Baptiſm from "Scripture; which is as much as to ſay, the Scrip-"ture poſitively aſſerts what it does not ſpeak "one Word of." And he commends Mr. *Wall*'s Modeſty, Ingenuity, and Wiſdom, for declining the Combat with that Weapon; whereas Mr. *Dorrington* much expos'd himſelf by taking the other Method, *Reſt. Let.* 7. *p.* 258. This is ſomewhat affrightning. Nevertheleſs, I ſhall venture upon it, ſince to the Scripture our Antagoniſts make their laſt and ſole Appeal; and if in this Enterprize we can have good Succeſs, by Mr. *Gale*'s Account, it muſt be wonderful.

Purſuant to my Deſign, the main Argument I intend to inſiſt upon, ſhall be taken from God's Act and Order to admit Infants, by Circumciſion, into the Patriarchal Church and Covenant. And to ground my Argument on a firm Baſe, and clear it of all material Objections, I ſhall proceed in the following Method.

I. I shall prove, That the Covenant which God made with *Abraham* and his Seed, was, in Substance, the very same Evangelical Covenant which we Christians enjoy at present; with this only Difference, That it is now more largely explain'd.

II. That this Covenant continued in Being, and full Force, throughout the *Mosaical* Oeconomy, down to our Saviour's Time, as a distinct Covenant from the Legal; while the *Jews*, after the giving of the Law, lived equally under Both.

III. That Circumcision was the proper Seal and initiatory Ordinance to the Patriarchal, or Gospel Covenant, not to the Legal; and rather signed the Spiritual Seed of *Abraham* than his Natural. And,

IV. I shall shew, How the Right which Infants have to be admitted into the Church and Evangelical Covenant, by the proper Ordinance, results from the Premises.

I. I am to prove, *That the Covenant which God made with* Abraham *and his Seed, was, in Substance, the very same Evangelical Covenant which we Christians enjoy at present; with this only Difference, That it is now more largely explain'd.* A Truth so manifest from the Nature of the Covenant, and so clearly attested by the Word of God, that none of our Adversaries, whom I have met with, have the Assurance to deny in express Terms; tho' they have endeavour'd to make it appear a Mix'd or Double Covenant.

Now Covenants receive their Specific Difference from their Nature and Contents, or from the Terms and Conditions on which they run. And there having been in pure Matters of Religion, but

Two

Two Divine Covenants made in general with Mankind, the firſt was call'd, *The Covenant of Works*; becauſe it requir'd a perfect Obedience in Man to his Maker's Laws, in order to Life and Juſtification. And it is ſtyled alſo, *The Old Covenant*, by reaſon it preceded the other; it being given to *Adam* and his Off-ſpring in his innocent State, and is now antiquated alſo by the Covenant of Grace, to all that lead true Evangelical Lives. Wherefore, the Conditions of the Firſt being broken, the Second and New Covenant ſucceeded, which had its Commencement ſoon after the Fall. And it is call'd, *The Covenant of Grace*, both becauſe it was an eminent Act of Favour in God to vouchſafe it to an apoſtatized Generation of Men, and becauſe it receives 'em to Mercy again, upon the moſt gracious and equitable Terms that the All-wiſe Governor of the World could give, or they, in Reaſon, deſire to have. This founds the true and eſſential Difference between the Two Covenants, and not only ſome particular and inferior Promiſes they may contain. For in Covenants, Obligations and Duties are to be conſidered, as well as the Bleſſings and Benefits that are therein ſtipulated for. And if the promiſed Bleſſings are of different Kinds, the Greateſt muſt carry the Precedency from the Leaſt, and prevail to give Denomination to the Covenant.

But if we take Obligations and Bleſſings together in this Account, we ſhall find both, in the *Abrahamical* Covenant, to be chiefly Spiritual and Evangelical. For the Patriarch and his Seed, were bound thereby to a Spiritual Service, and they had Spiritual and Eternal Bleſſings inſur'd unto them for their Reward. On God's Part, Chriſt Jeſus, with all Goſpel Grace and Happineſs, were covenanted for; and on Man's Part, Faith and a ſincere Obedience. To *Abraham*, therefore, in that Covenant, it was thus promiſed; That *God would be a God to him, and to his Seed after him to all Generations*;

That

That *he should be the* Father *of many Nations*; and, That *in his Seed all the Families of the Earth should be blessed.* These Promises may be seen in *Gen.* xvii. and elsewhere; which yet could never be verified, if they ingag'd only for Temporal Blessings, and extended no further than to the single Nation of the *Hebrews.* But of these general Heads the Holy Ghost is the best Interpreter; who teaches us, That by them *God did preach the Gospel unto* Abraham; *Gal.* iii. 8. and promised Christ unto him, *v.* 16. and, *That this Covenant was confirmed of God in Christ, v.* 17. the Foundation of it being laid, and the Ratification made, in the Shedding of his precious Blood. And that good God, who ingag'd by Covenant to give his Son to die for *Abraham* and his Seed, how should he not with him also freely give them all things necessary to Salvation? As Remission of Sin, or Justification by Faith, *Gal.* iii. 8. *Rom.* iv. 11. the Adoption of Sons, Grace to serve God acceptably, and the Inheritance of everlasting Life. What more have we Christians? Or are not these the Sum and *Compendium* of Gospel Mercies? So the principal Blessings promised in the Patriarchal Covenant, were purely Spiritual, Evangelical and Eternal.

Likewise, the Obligations and Duties to which *Abraham* and his Seed were bound by Covenant, were of a Moral and Spiritual Nature, like those that are now incumbent on the Church of Christ. For, according to the Tenor of it, not only *Abraham* was injoyn'd *to walk before God and be perfect, Gen.* xvii. 1. but all the Circumcised Seed initiated into this Covenant, were tyed to the Circumcision of the Heart, whereof the outward Ordinance was symbolical. Always did it import to them, That they should mortify the carnal Affections, and put off *the Body of the Lusts of the Flesh, Col.* ii. 11. and be thereby wrought into true Obedience to the Will of God.

God. And upon the Myſtical Signification of this Rite, they are commanded, *to circumciſe the Fore-Skin of their Heart, and to be no more ſtiff-necked*, *Deut.* x. 16. Which is repeated *Jer.* iv. 4. So that Circumciſion, according to its ſpiritual Meaning and Intention, oblig'd all that receiv'd it in their Fleſh, to a ſpiritual Worſhip and Obedience in their Soul. But, by reaſon this could not be performed without the regenerating and ſanctifying Grace of God, even this Grace is made ſure by Covenant-Promiſe to the circumciſed Seed of *Abraham*. *The Lord thy God will circumciſe thine Heart, and the Heart of thy Seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine Heart, and with all thy Soul, that thou mayeſt live*, Duet. xxx. 6. Exactly ſo it ever was, and will be, under the gracious Covenant of the Goſpel. Duty in the Soul and Spirit is commanded, and the Divine Aſſiſtance promis'd, that, by a joynt Concurrence of both, the Work of Religion may go on ſucceſsfully. *Make ye a new Heart and a new Spirit*, is their Duty, *Ezek.* xviii. 31. And yet this is what God himſelf undertakes to do in their behalf by his gracious Operations on their Soul, *Chap.* xi. 19, 20. and *Chap.* xxxvi. 26, 27.

Thus the Bleſſings and Benefits, the Duties and Obligations of the *Abrahamical* Covenant, were Spiritual and Evangelical, as they are expounded to our Hands by *Moſes*, the Prophets, and St. *Paul*. And *Abraham*, tho' he bore not the Name, was, in Reality, as much a Chriſtian, as Believers are ſince the Incarnation of God's Son. For he ſaw the Day of Chriſt, and rejoyced in the Sight, his Saviour being revealed and inſured to him by a Covenant-Promiſe; and he embracing the Promiſe by a firm and obedient Faith. And the ſame, in a due Proportion, holds true of the other Patriarchs and righteous Men of his Race, *Heb.* xi. 13.

What

What Mr. *Tombs* and his Followers have objected againſt this, amounts to no more, than to urge, "That there are Temporal Bleſſings promiſed in the "Patriarchal Covenant; as, The Land of *Canaan* "for an Inheritance to *Abraham*'s Poſterity; The "Birth of *Iſaac*; and Deliverance from *Egypt*. "Therefore, the Covenant could not be purely "Spiritual and Evangelical, but was a double Co-"venant, or of a mix'd Nature." But theſe Temporal Promiſes, when ballanc'd againſt the Spiritual, can make no manner of Counter-poize, and are of no Moment in the Compariſon. Still, therefore, the moſt worthy and excellent Promiſes, or Bleſſings, ought to give Name unto the Covenant. But I anſwer farther.

1. If Temporal Promiſes contained in the Covenant, change its Nature from being purely Spiritual, into Mix'd, then, I think, it may be juſtly queſtion'd, Whether the Church of God has ever enjoy'd a Covenant that was purely Spiritual? I am certain, we Chriſtians enjoy it not; which ſuffices for my purpoſe, to ſet the Patriarchal on the ſame Level with our own. For Temporal Promiſes are compriz'd within the Limits of the Goſpel Charter. Such as, *Bleſſed are the Meek, for they ſhall inherit the Earth*, Matth. v. 5. *Seek ye firſt the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs, and all thoſe Things*, i. e. Neceſſaries for the preſent Life, *ſhall be added unto you*, Matth. vi. 33. *For Godlineſs hath Promiſe of the Life that now is, and of that which to come*, 1 Tim. iv. 8. More may be ſeen, *Mark* x. 29, 30. *Luke* xii. 28, and xxi. 18. *Epheſ.* vi. 2, 3. *Heb.* xiii. 5, 6. 1 *Pet.* iii. 10, 11, 13. Either, therefore, this mighty Argument muſt be dropp'd, or elſe, that very Goſpel-Covenant which Chriſt in Perſon preach'd, muſt be no longer counted purely Spiritual.

2. The

2. The Promiſe of the Land of *Canaan* made to *Abraham* in the Covenant, was not to receive its Accompliſhment in his Time, nor in the Time of his Poſterity, for the full ſpace of Four hundred and thirty Years to come. But he and the other Patriarchs confeſs'd themſelves to be *Strangers and Pilgrims on the Earth*, Heb. xi. 13. Or in the promiſed Land, where they had *no Inheritance, ſo much as to ſet their foot upon*, Acts vii. 5. except a Spot or two of purchas'd Ground, in which their Dead were buried. But in that Interval, they had an Entail of a contrary Nature to Eaſe and Affluence, in a Land that flowed with Milk and Honey. For, in giving the Covenant, God tells *Abram*; *Know for a ſurety, that thy Seed ſhall be a Stranger in a Land that is not theirs, and ſhall ſerve them*; *and they ſhall afflict them Four hundred Years*, Gen. xv. 13. So the Patriarchs with their Families, which were then the Church of God, had, for that Space of Time, no Benefit to expect by Poſſeſſion from the promiſed Land of *Canaan*; but their Covenant was as good as ſtript of all Temporal Enjoyment. And, therefore, if this Conſideration be of any Weight, their Covenant was more purely Spiritual unto them, than it is to us. Yet is it the State of the Church within that Interval, (which we aſſert to be purely Evangelical, becauſe it was without Mixture of Legal Appendages, and *Moſaic* Inſtitutions) from whence we take our Pattern for the Forming of Church-Membership, and derive the Lawfulneſs, if not the Duty, of initiating Infants into the Church and Covenant.

3. In *Deut.* v. 2, 3. *Moſes* acquaints the Children of Iſrael, *The Lord our God made a Covenant with us in* Horeb. *The Lord made not this Covenant with our Fathers, but with us, even with us, who are all of us here alive this Day.* He undoubtedly means the Legal Covenant, and aſſures the *Iſraelites*, that it was made *with them only, who were there preſent and alive*,

alive. Not, therefore, with their Fathers, *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*. Then must the Covenant made with those Fathers, be, in its whole Nature, a distinct and different Covenant from the Legal. Whence it follows, by the cleareſt Conſequence, That ſince the Covenant made with *Abraham* was not the Legal, it muſt neceſſarily be the pure Evangelical Covenant, becauſe there were no more than thoſe Two. And ſo, if *Moſes* be allowed to underſtand the Nature and Difference of the Covenants better than Mr. *Tombs*, he has utterly overthrown his Argument.

Grounding my ſelf on theſe Reaſons, I conceive, it is fully prov'd, that the *Abrahamical* Covenant was a purely Spiritual and Evangelical Covenant, or the ſame in Subſtance with that which the Chriſtian Church has always lived under.

II. I am next to prove, *That this Covenant continued in Being and full Force throughout the* Moſaical *Oeconomy, down to our Saviour's Time, as a diſtinct Covenant from the Legal; while the* Jews, *after the giving of the Law, lived equally under Both.* Upon *Adam's* Fall, the Evangelical Covenant was firſt made and publiſh'd to Mankind, there being no Room nor Occaſion for it in their State of Innocency. To *Abraham* it was repeated in plainer Terms, ratified by an external Seal, and made the Privilege of a peculiar People. Nor had the Church any other Covenant beſide this, 'till That of the Law was ſuper-induc'd. Then the *Jews*, with their Proſelytes of Righteouſneſs, were brought under Two diſtinct Covenants, The Evangelical, and the Legal. Neither could theſe Two Covenants ever coaleſce and unite in One, becauſe of the irreconcileable Oppoſition between their Natures; nor ought they to be confounded by Authors, as, I think, they have too commonly been in their Accounts of the *Judaic* Church and Diſpenſation. Now, that the Evangelical Cove-

nant made with *Abraham* continued in Force, when the Legal commenc'd, and from thence down to our Saviour's Time, will appear by the following Arguments.

For, 1. After the Legal Covenant of Works was proclaim'd and eſtabliſh'd with the *Jews* on Mount *Sinai*, we find *Moſes*, in God's Name, making another Covenant with them; which could be nothing but the Renewal, or Continuation, of the Patriarchal Covenant of Grace. For thus we read *Deut.* xxix. 1. *Theſe are the Words of the Covenant, which the Lord commanded* Moſes *to make with the Children of* Iſrael *in the Land of* Moab, BESIDE *the Covenant which he made with them in* Horeb (which was one of the Summits of Mount *Sinai*). Commentators do generally interpret this Covenant in the Land of *Moab*, to be only a Repetition of the *Sinai* Covenant. But with what Propriety of Speech, or Probability of Truth, the Contents of the Covenant, and the Letter of the Text, declare, which muſt be forcibly ſtrained from its Genuine Senſe, and Grammatical Conſtruction, before it can bear with their Interpretation. For if the Covenant in *Moab* was a Covenant BESIDE that in *Horeb*, as the Original imports, and all the Verſions I have ſeen do ſo render it, it is then impoſſible it ſhould be the Same, becauſe the *Idiom* and Manner of Expreſſion, will not admit of that Senſe. For the Word BESIDE, is added and joyn'd to the Covenant itſelf, to ſignify its real Difference and Diſtinction; not to the Promulgation of the Covenant, to denote only its Repetition. To promiſe, or give a Thing BESIDE another, ſhews the Thing to be quite different from the other; whereas, to promiſe, or convey the ſame Thing a thouſand times over, makes no Alteration in the Thing itſelf.

Alſo, if we conſider the Contents, and particular Expreſſions uſed in this Covenant, that was made in the Land of *Moab*, they will evince its Diſtinction from

from the Legal. I have prov'd before, from *Deut.* v. 2, 3. That the Covenant made with the *Jews* in *Horeb*, was not the Covenant made with *Abraham* and the Fathers. But this Covenant made with the *Jews* in *Moab*, appears to be the same that was made with the Fathers, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*. For thus the Terms of it expresly run there, *Deut.* xxix. 12, 13. as *Moses* tells the Collective Body of the *Jews* and Strangers: *That thou shouldest enter into Covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his Oath which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this Day; That he may establish thee to Day for a People to himself; and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy Fathers, to* Abraham, *to* Isaac, *and to* Jacob. And so, if this Covenant made with the *Jews* in *Moab*, was the same which God sware to *Abraham* and the Fathers, as the Words import, it could not be the Legal Covenant of Works, but the Evangelical Covenant of Grace and Mercy. Moreover, it contains the same Spiritual Blessings with those that were covenanted for to *Abraham*. For here the Lord promises to be a God to the *Jews* and their Seed, as he had promised to *Abraham* in the Covenant of Grace, and sign'd it by Circumcision, *Gen.* xvii. 7. When God expresses himself thus to Men, in the way of Promise and special Favour, it signifies to them some eminent Blessing; which, in the present Case, must be spiritual, because, in parallel Places, it is so intended and understood. In *Exod.* iii. 6. God from the Bush declares to *Moses*, *I am the God of thy Father, the God of* Abraham, *the God of* Isaac, *and the God of* Jacob. To which he adds, *v.* 15. *This is my Name for ever, and this my Memorial to all Generations.* From those Words to *Moses*, our Saviour deduces that spiritual and eternal Blessing, the Resurrection from the Dead, in his Refutation of the *Sadducees*, *Matt.* xxii. 32. And after him, St. *Paul*

teaches, That the the Promiſe to be their God, implied a heavenly Inheritance to the Patriarchs, while in this World they were left deſtitute of a Poſſeſſion. For, as *Strangers and Pilgrims on Earth, they ſought and deſired a better Country, that is a heavenly. Wherefore God is not aſhamed to be called their God, for he hath provided for them a City*, Heb. xi. 16. And that the Phraſe we ſpeak of, had a peculiar Relation to the Graces and ſpiritual Bleſſings of the Evangelical Covenant, we learn farther from his own Mouth, *Jer.* xxxi. 33. where, expreſſing the Terms of the Goſpel Covenant, in Oppoſition to the Legal, he thus promiſes and declares: *I will put my Law in their inward Parts, and write it in their Hearts; and will be their God, and they ſhall be my People.* If poſſible it was to miſtake their Meaning, St. *Paul* prevents it by tranſcribing the Words, with thoſe adjoyning, and making them to comprehend the Sum of Spiritual and Evangelical Bleſſings, *Heb.* viii. 10. The ſame Senſe they muſt have *Rev.* xxi. 3. and in ſeveral other Places where they occur. How poor and cavilling therefore is the Sophiſtry of ſome of our Antagoniſts, who, ſtriving with all their Might to miſrepreſent the *Abrahamical* Covenant, would fain perſuade their Readers, that the Promiſe, *I will be a God to thee, and thy Seed after thee*, Gen. xvii. 7. doth ſignify no more of a ſpiritual Bleſſing, than that Preface does at the Giving of the fiery Law which produced Wrath, *I am the Lord thy God*, Exod. xx. 1? Whereas the Difference is plain and palpable. For this is no Promiſe of future Favour and Benevolence, but a ſolemn Declaration of God's Sovereignty and Dominion, which over the *Jews* he had particularly acquir'd by their Redemption out of *Egypt*, in order to oblige them to Obedience.

To clear this Point farther; The Covenant made in the Land of *Moab*, contain'd an expreſs Promiſe of Grace unto the *Jews*; and ſo muſt be the Evangelical

gelical Covenant made with *Abraham*, not the Legal on Mount *Sinai*, which expreſly ingag'd for no ſuch Gift. For the Words and Terms of that Covenant, are continued to the End of *Deut. Chap.* xxx. In the 6th Verſe whereof, *Moſes* tells them, in God's Name; *The Lord thy God will circumciſe thine Heart, and the Heart of thy Seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine Heart, and with all thy Soul, that thou mayeſt live.* That this can be done only by the inward ſanctifying Grace of God's Spirit, proper to the Goſpel Covenant, and is the Spiritual Circumciſion of the Heart intimated by the Carnal, is acknowledg'd and maintain'd by all Orthodox Chriſtians. And whoſoever carefully peruſes that xxxth. *Chapter*, he will ſee, That the Obedience to the Laws of God there requir'd, muſt proceed from an internal Principle that affects and converts the Soul, but muſt not be ſlight and ſuperficial.

Once more; In the Covenant made in the Land of *Moab*, Evangelical Faith is compriz'd; or the Word of Faith, and the Preaching of Faith, as it ſtands oppoſite to the Law of *Moſes*. Whence it undeniably follows, that it cannot be the ſame with the Legal Covenant made in *Horeb*. My Obſervation I raiſe from the Words in *Chap.* xxx. 10, *&c.* which thus conclude: *The Word is very nigh thee, in thy Mouth, and in thy Heart*, (the very ſame Expreſſion we found in *Jeremiah* concerning the Tenor of the Goſpel Covenant) *that thou mayeſt do it.* Of which Paſſage let St. *Paul* again be the Expoſitor; who, quoting that Place in *Deuteronomy*, and oppoſing the Words to the *Moſaical* Law, affirms them *to be the Language of the Righteouſneſs which is by Faith*, Rom. x. 5, 6. And rehearſing in particularthoſe Expreſſions, as the Language of Faith; *The Word is nigh thee, even in thy Mouth, and in thy Heart*; he adds his Comment, *That is, the Word of Faith which we preach*, v. 8. Wherefore an Evangelical Covenant of Grace

and Faith the *Jews* had, as given in the Land of *Moab*, beſide the Legal Covenant on Mount *Sinai*.

2. If the Evangelical Covenant of Grace was diſcontinu'd to the *Jews*, during the Term of the Legal Covenant of Works, it will be hard, if not impoſſible, to account for their Service and Salvation. For, did the Legal Covenant promiſe to ſupply them with the Divine Aſſiſtance for theſe Ends? Or could they pray and hope for it with Faith, when they had no Promiſe? No Covenant-Right had they to Grace, nor Grounds to expect it in this Caſe, except they could ſpring alone from Natural Religion. Yet for Grace they faithfully pray'd with good Succeſs; whereof, to name no more, *David*'s Prayer is a ſignal Inſtance, *Pſ.* li. 10, 11, 12. And by Grace and Faith did righteous Men live in their Church, pleaſe God, and obtain the Crown of eternal Life. But this could never be by virtue of the Legal Covenant. For, as we learn from the New Teſtament, *The Law was weak thro' the Fleſh, and made nothing perfect.* 'Twas eſtabliſh'd upon Promiſes inferior to thoſe of Grace and everlaſting Felicity; the Bleſſings it directly promis'd, being only Temporal; 'twas *a killing Letter, not a quickning Spirit*, and ſubjected People to a Curſe; 'twas *the Miniſtration of Death and Condemnation*, becauſe it occaſionally increaſed Sins by the Impoſition of heavy Burdens and difficult Duties, where there was not Strength proportionable for their Diſcharge; and ſo it wrought Wrath, deceiv'd and ſlew its Subjects, but ſav'd them not. *The Spirit came not by the Works of the Law, but by the Hearing of Faith*; ſuch Goſpel-Faith as *Moſes* preach'd, when he deliver'd the Covenant of Grace in the Land of *Moab*. Full was the Law of carnal Ordinances, beggarly Elements and Rudiments of the World; which muſt be all punctually kept, or there was no Juſtification unto Life: So that, according

cording to its Tenor, no Man could possibly serve God in such a spiritual Manner, as was requisite to Acceptance and Salvation. For, by *the Deeds of the Law shall no Flesh be justified in God's Sight.* Wherefore, by the Legal Covenant, consider'd as such only, the *Jews* were all condemn'd and dead Men; because, in its Account, they were all destituted and abandon'd Sinners, without Power from Above to perform their Duty, and gain Approbation with their God. Except, then, we were minded to turn rank *Pelagians*, we must of necessity grant, that throughout the whole Time of their Legal Dispensation, they were also under a better Covenant, that administred unto them spiritual Succours to serve God faithfully; or else were all eternally lost. And if so, their being God's peculiar People, chosen and beloved above other Nations, would have been a most unhappy and mortifying Consideration, and plainly contradictory in itself. Better, of the two, had it been for them, to be thrown out of that Relation, and permitted, like the Gentiles, to feel after God in the way of Natural Religion, as he might be found, than be clogg'd with Ceremonies to multiply Sins, and confin'd to a Covenant that must condemn them. But with many excellent Livers was their Church adorn'd from Time to Time, who serv'd God from the Soul and Spirit, and were received by him into eternal Glory. From whence I conclude, That they were not under a Covenant of Works and Wrath, of Condemnation and Death, alone; but also under the Evangelical Covenant of Grace, Mercy, and a Spiritual Life, made to the Fathers, and renewed in the Land of *Moab*, which impos'd practicable Conditions of Salvation, and afforded Power for acceptable Performance. And as our *Chancery* is to the *Statute Law*, so was this Covenant, as a Court of Equity, to relieve the distressed *Jews* under the rigid Law of Works. For,

3. As by the Goſpel Repreſentations of their State, we find the *Jews*, under the Old Teſtament, utterly loſt by the Legal Covenant; ſo we find, all righteous and good Livers among them ſav'd by the gracious Covenant of their Fathers. *Jews* thoſe holy Men were, not only outwardly in the Fleſh and Letter, but inwardly in the Heart and Spirit; and the true *Circumciſion* they were, as we Chriſtians are deſcrib'd, *to worſhip God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Chriſt Jeſus*, without repoſing their *Confidence in the Fleſh*, Phil. iii. 3. And what they actually were, the reſt of their Church might have been, as they were bound in Duty; foraſmuch as ſufficient Grace was ingag'd unto them by a ſure Covenant: For the Goſpel was preach'd to them as it is to us, *Heb.* iv. 2. not in the Types and Shadows of the Law only, but in plainer Language. St. *Paul* thus enumerates their Spiritual Privileges and Condition, *Rom.* ix. 4. *Who are* Iſraelites, *to whom pertaineth the Adoption, and the Glory, and the Covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the Service of God; whoſe are the Fathers.* According to God's Purpoſe, ſpiritual and true *Iſraelites* they ought and might have been: The Adoption was theirs, not to be Slaves under the Yoke of Bondage, but to be the Regenerate Off-ſpring of their heavenly Father. Theirs was the Glory of God's Preſence in the *Shechinah* and in the Spirit. Theirs the Law, Moral and Spiritual, as well as Ritual; for Holy and Spiritual, Juſt and Good it was, *Rom.* vii. 12, 14. as they had it in the Covenant of their Fathers, continued to them in the Land of *Moab*. Theirs the Service of God; both exterior, in Ordinances, and interior, in the Heart. Theirs the Fathers, in whom their chief Intereſt ſhould have been, by a ſpiritual Regeneration, to follow their Pattern, that they might be their True Children, and enjoy their Privileges,

Privileges. And theirs the Covenants, in the Plural Number, which are call'd, The *Covenants of Promise*, Eph. ii. 12. The Legal, with its Temporal Promises, and the Evangelical, with those that are Spiritual and Eternal. So St. *Peter* tells them, *Acts* iii. 25. *Ye are the Children of the Prophets, and of the Covenant which God made with our Fathers, saying unto* Abraham, *And in thy Seed shall all the Kindreds of the Earth be blessed.* If Children of that Covenant they and their Predecessors were, they were its Subjects also, and in the Right or Possession of its Privileges. And, finally, Christ was theirs in a special Manner, as born of their Nation, to be King of the *Jews*, and the Saviour of his People *Israel*. A Right, therefore, they had to all Graces and spiritual Blessings, had they strove to make good their Right; which shews, what Covenant they were always under.

Clouded, indeed, and cumber'd it was, by the Addition of the Legal, with its numerous Ceremonies; so that, to vulgar Capacities, it might lie out of Sight, and be, in Appearance, lost. But wise and holy Men had an illuminated Mind, that saw thro' the Clouds to Christ Jesus, who was *the End of the Law*, Rom. x. 4. or the Completion of it, *for Righteousness to every one that believeth. Nor did they forget their Interest in that gracious Covenant of their Fathers, which preached Christ unto them, with all his Benefits.* For, living by Faith, *they did all eat of the same spiritual Meat, and did all drink of the same spiritual Drink: For they drank of that spiritual Rock which followed them; and that Rock was Christ*, 1 Cor. x. 3, 4. *And through Faith they all obtained a good Report, though they received not the Promise; God having provided for us some better Thing, that they without us should not be made perfect*, *Heb.* xi. 39, 40. To the first Fathers, the Promises of Christ and Heaven were afar off, *ver.* 13.; to the later

later *Jews*, they gradually drew nearer: But accompliſh'd they were not, before the Incarnation of our Bleſſed Lord; nor will they fully be, 'till we are all inſtated in the Kingdom of Glory. *Theſe Things the Old Saints foreſaw by Faith in God's Promiſes. For Chriſt was a Miniſter of the Circumciſion, to confirm the Promiſes made unto the Fathers*, Rom. xv. 8. Becauſe in him alone they are fulfill'd, and receive their Conſummation.

4. As the Legal Covenant, preciſely conſider'd, promis'd no ſupernatural Aſſiſtance to keep the Law, ſo it expreſly promis'd no eternal Reward in Heaven to its exacteſt Keepers; but a proſperous Abode in the Land of *Canaan*, was all it directly ingaged for in their Behalf. The Covenant of Grace is eſtabliſh'd on better Promiſes, *Heb.* viii. 6.; ſuch are, The Help of God's Spirit to live religiouſly, Pardon of Sins, *from which they could not be juſtified by the Law of* Moſes, *Acts* xiii. 39. and, above all, eternal Bliſs in Heaven, whereby it became an Introduction to a *better Hope*, Heb. vii. 19. If, therefore, the *Jews* were under no other Covenant beſide the Legal, how could their righteous Men expect, with Faith, the Inheritance of eternal Life for their Reward? Was it their native Right? or, Could they claim it, in their lapſed State, by a Covenant of Works? Surely, they could never believe and hope for it, without a free Promiſe by the Covenant of Grace made with their Fathers, and perpetuated to them in all Ages. Yet this Hope and Faith they conſtantly entertain'd, knowing, that, by the Patriarchal Covenant, God had bound himſelf to be their God, an exceeding great Reward. Purſuant to which Obligation, they truſted he would raiſe them up from their Graves to the Fruition of Himſelf in Heaven. Before the Law, *Moſes* bore the *Reproach of Chriſt*; *for he had a Reſpect to the Recompence of the Reward*, Heb. xi. 26. Under the Law, they ſtill retained the ſame Expectation:

ſtation: *For now*, ſays St. *Paul*, *Acts* xxvi. 6, 7. *I ſtand and am judged for the Hope of the Promiſe made to our Fathers; unto which Promiſe our Twelve Tribes, inſtantly ſerving God Night and Day, hope to come.* And what was that promiſed Hope, but the Reſurrection to eternal Life, as the next Verſe points it out? *Why ſhould it be thought a Thing incredible with you, that God ſhould raiſe the Dead?* And for the *Hope and Reſurrection of the Dead* was he *called in Queſtion*, Chap. xxiii. 6. More plainly yet, *Chap.* xxiv. 15. *I have Hopes towards God, which the* Jews *themſelves allow, that there ſhall be a Reſurrection both of the Juſt and Unjuſt.* For this was taught by the Law and the Prophets, *Ver.* 14. and by *Moſes* and the Prophets, *Chap.* xxvi. 22. Becauſe *Moſes*, when he had given the Law, did alſo, in the Land of *Moab*, preach the Goſpel to the *Jews*; and both Covenants, with their reſpective Bleſſings, are contained in the ſame Code, or Books of the Law. Upon which Foundation, their holy Men patiently indured the moſt exquiſite Tortures, *not accepting Deliverance, that they might obtain a better Reſurrection*, *Heb.* xi. 35. So from 1 *Macch.* vii. it appears, that they had a firm Belief and Proſpect into a Future State; which *Joſephus* alſo teſtifies to be their Faith. And of their principal Sect, the *Phariſees*, it is recorded, That they profeſſed a Reſurrection from the Dead, *Acts* xxiii. 8. Not to mention *Dan.* xii. 2, 3. Wherefore, this Faith and Hope deriving not from the Spirit of the Law, which gave them no certain Grounds for ſuch Dependance; I conceive, it muſt needs derive from the Evangelical Covenant made with *Abraham*, and continued to the *Jews* with the Legal.

5. St. *Paul*, *Gal.* iii. 17. teaches, That the Covenant which was confirm'd before of God in Chriſt, the Law (which was Four hundred and thirty Years after) could not diſannul, that it ſhould make the Pro-

Promiſe of none effect. That Covenant was the *Abrahamical*; which if it neither was, nor could be diſanull'd by the Law, it muſt, with the Law, remain in Force. Elſe, to be ſuſpended, ſuperſeded, or removed out of the way for the ſpace of Fifteen or Sixteen Centuries, while the Law continued, was no leſs than to be cancell'd, diſannull'd, and made of none effect during all that Time; which the Apoſtle denies the Law to have done, or to be in its Power. If thro'out that Interval, the Promiſe remained in Force, the Covenant muſt, which grounded the Promiſe.

So the *Jews* lived under Two diſtinct Covenants while the Legal Diſpenſation laſted. And if in this Opinion I am ſingular, I muſt ſtill continue of this Mind, 'till I ſee it prov'd erroneous. Then I promiſe readily to retract, and ſubmit to the better Judgment of the Learned; who, as far as my Knowledge reaches, have hitherto, with little or no Exception, gone againſt me in a Body, and caſt their Schemes in another Model.

III. The Third Point to be proved, is, *That Circumciſion was the proper Seal and initiatory Ordinance to the Patriarchal, or Goſpel Covenant, not to the Legal; and rather ſign'd the Spiritual Seed of* Abraham, *than his Natural.* For,

1. When the Sacrament of Circumciſion was firſt inſtituted, there was no Covenant with the Church of God in Being, beſide the Evangelical; no *Moſaical* Law on foot for Four hundred and thirty Years after, neither ſignified nor intended, except in God's ſecret Counſel, upon Foreſight of the *Jews* untractable Temper. Not a Syllable is mentioned, or hinted, concerning the Law and Legal Covenant, when the Goſpel Covenant, ſign'd by Circumciſion, was given to *Abraham*, nor any where elſe before the *Jews* Rebellions in the Wilderneſs: Therefore, Circumciſion, in its proper and primitive Deſign, could not

not be instituted, as a Legal Rite, to sign the Covenant of Works, which had no Existence at that Time, nor above Four Centuries after, nor was at all known to the Church of God. For it is an approved Maxim in Philosophy, *Non Entis, nullæ sunt Affectiones*; What has no Being, has no Qualities, Properties, or Affections. Circumcision could, therefore, have no relation to a future, unknown Law, given to Posterity on Mount *Sinai*, and which God Himself intended not to give, but on Supposition. For, certainly, He would not ordain a Sacrament so long before, to seal a Covenant that was no where extant then in Nature, nor appoint an initiatory Rite to enter Men into it, when he gave them not the least Notice or Intimation of it beforehand. Wherefore, Circumcision must be a Ceremony that originally sign'd the pure Covenant of Grace, which alone existed at its Institution; as it sign'd to *Abraham* the Righteousness of Faith, which he had, being yet uncircumcised.

2. At the giving of the Law on Mount *Sinai*, the *Jews* were not circumcised, nor initiated by that Ordinance into its Profession and Obedience; but all the People that were circumcised, were circumcised before in *Egypt* (without mention of the Law) to the Evangelical Covenant, which they and their Fathers had always lived under from the Days of *Abraham*. For, at the Promulgation of the Law, no mention was made of that Ceremony as the Covenanting Ordinance, neither were the People circumcised 'till about Forty Years after, when they had finish'd their Travels, pass'd over *Jordan*, and *Joshua*, by God's Command, gave Order for the Performance of that Rite, *Josh.* v. 2, &c. So that it was not done by the proper Legislator of the Legal Covenant. And then, also, there was not the least Intimation given of it, as a Rite that enter'd them into that Covenant, and bound them to the Observation

tion of its Precepts; but only, that God thereby *rolled from them the Reproach of* Egypt, *Ver.* 9. or removed the Infamy of their being uncircumciſed, like other Nations that were out of Covenant, and viſibly undiſtinguiſh'd from them by his own Badge and Character, nor appropriated to himſelf by that ſacred Ordinance, as his Church and peculiar People. Nay, and I dare poſitively affirm, That it is no where implied in the Old Teſtament, that Circumciſion was a Rite intended by God to initiate Perſons into the Legal Covenant, and oblige them to the Obſervance of its Conditions. If this be true, as I am ſatisfied it is, what bold Preſumption muſt it be in our Adverſaries, to endeavour to face us down with poſitive Aſſeverations, That Circumciſion was a pure Legal Rite, which ſign'd the Covenant of Works, when the Scripture makes it God's Ordinance to ſign the Covenant of Grace alone; but is perfectly ſilent, throughout the whole *Judaic* Oeconomy, of any reſpect it bore to the *Moſaical* Law, as a diſtinct Covenant from that of *Abraham?* They who profeſs to believe and admit of nothing about poſitive Ordinances, but what they receive from clear Scripture-Evidences, do herein act very partially and inconſiſtently with their Pretenſions. What they alledge for their purpoſe out of the New Teſtament, ſhall be conſidered hereafter.

Circumciſion did not only ſign *Abraham*'s Natural Seed, that deſcended from his Loyns, but Strangers alſo, who were thereby mark'd as Proſelytes to his Religion, and made his Spiritual Seed, tho' they never iſſued from his Bowels. For this is God's Order, *Gen.* xvii. 12, 13, 14. *He that is Eight Days old ſhall be circumciſed among you, every Man Child in your Generations, he that is born in the Houſe, or bought with Money of any Stranger, which is not of thy Seed; he that is born in thy Houſe, and he that is bought with thy Money, muſt needs be circumciſed;*

and

and my Covenant shall be in your Flesh for an everlasting Covenant. And the uncircumcised Man Child, whose Flesh of his Foreskin is not circumcised, that Soul shall be cut off from his People; he hath broken my Covenant. Here were more than *Abraham*'s Natural Seed within the Covenant, and intitled to its Privileges by Circumcision; so that their Assertion is notoriously false, who affirm, That Rite was ordain'd to distinguish his Natural Seed from Strangers.

No less false and absurd it is to affirm, That Circumcision made those Strangers to be Members of *Abraham*'s Family; which seems to suggest, that it made them not Members of the Church. But did these exact Textuaries, who pretend to hold so close to Scriptural Accounts, learn this Doctrine from the Holy Bible? Where have they least Support for their Chimerical Notion in all that Book? Or is it indeed credible, that God's main Concern was to bring Servants into *Abraham*'s House by a Divine Covenant, under the Penalty of Excision; and that his Providence was more imploy'd to fill up the Families of Men, than his own Church? But it falls out unluckily for our Adversaries Cause, that the Strangers then circumcised, were already Members of *Abraham*'s Family; and how could they be made by Circumcision what they were before? for in that Quality they were circumcis'd, *v.* 27. Three hundred and eighteen domestic Servants had *Abraham* before that Time, that were born in his House, and could bear Arms, *Gen.* xiv. 14. And, it is like, their Numbers in the *Interim* were increas'd thro' God's Blessing upon the Patriarch. What now did Circumcision add to their State in a Civil Respect, seeing they were already his Servants, and Members of his Family? Did it thenceforth make them Freemen, or adopt them for his Sons and Heirs? This it is to trifle with the Scriptures and God's Ordinances?

The

The Truth is, They were Men of the ſame Religion with himſelf. For it is utterly improbable the holy Patriarch, or any of his Race next enſuing, would entertain a Set of Infidels, or Idolaters, in their domeſtic Service, without teaching them better things. Particularly, in regard to *Abraham*, this could never agree with that glorious Character and Teſtimony which God himſelf gives to his faithful Friend, *Gen.* xviii. 19. *I know* Abraham, *that he will command his Children, (Iſhmael* therefore, and the Sons of *Keturah*, as well as *Iſaac) and his Houſhold after him*, (the Servants belonging to his Family) *and they ſhall keep the Way of the Lord, to do Juſtice and Judgment, and that the Lord may bring upon* Abraham *that which he hath ſpoken of him:* Namely, *That all the Nations of the Earth ſhould be bleſſed in him*, *v.* 18. This indeed ſpeaks of Futurity; but who can think *Abraham* had neglected ſuch a neceſſary Duty for the Time aforegoing? *Iſhmael* then being Thirteen Years old, and piouſly educated, and the Men of *Abraham*'s Houſe in adult Age, when they were circumciſed, had, in kind, the ſame Righteouſneſs, or Juſtification of Faith, that *Abraham* had, which was equally ſeal'd by that Ordinance of Circumciſion to them All; as likewiſe to the ſincere Proſelytes in the Times following.

For theſe Proſelytes the Law of God did afterwards make this Proviſion, *Exod.* xii. 48, 49. *When a Stranger ſhall ſojourn with thee, and will keep the Paſſover of the* Lord, *let all his Males be circumciſed, and then let him come near and keep it; and he ſhall be as one that is born in the* Land: *for no uncircumciſed Perſon ſhall eat thereof. One Law ſhall be to him that is home-born, and to the Stranger that ſojourneth among you.* By this Law, both the Adult Perſons that were proſelyted, and their Male-Infants, were to be alike circumciſed with the Native *Jews*, and thereupon admitted into religious Communion.

Some-

Sometimes vaſt multitudes of Proſelytes accrew'd to the Church by the Benefit of this *Moſaical* Law, and that to *Abraham*. I omit the *Shechemites*, becauſe the Sons of *Jacob*, without their Father's Knowledge, fraudulently intended to make 'em Sacrifices to their Reſentments for the Rape of *Dinah*, rather then Proſelytes to God by Circumciſion. But, probably, among theſe Proſelytes were that mix'd Multitude, who, ſtruck with Aſtoniſhment and Conviction by the Wonders they ſaw in *Egypt*, followed the Camp of *Iſrael*, and might joyn themſelves to the People of God, *Exod.* xii. 38. And ſo they, or their Children, might be circumciſed with the *Jews* in *Gilgal*. For into the Covenant of Grace thoſe Strangers were admitted, *Deut.* xxix. 11. Of this ſort alſo were the *Gibeonites*, who were made Servants in the Houſe of God, even *Hewers of Wood and Drawers of Water for the Altar of the Lord, in the Place which he ſhould chuſe*, Joſhua ix. 27. To which Offices they had never been promoted, except they had renounc'd Idolatry, and given in their Names to the God of *Iſrael*, as *Maſius* obſerves there on *Ver.* 22, 23. For ſuch Miniſters were included in the Covenant of Grace, as we find the Hewers of Wood and Drawers of Water were, *Deut.* xxix. 11. tho' perhaps, theſe laſt had no other than Civil Employments. But in the ſucceſſive Reigns of *David* and *Solomon*, ſo numerous and frequent were the Proſelytes, that the Church was backward to receive them, upon Suſpicion, that the victorious Arms of the Father, and the magnificent Splendor of the Son's Court, were the chief Inducements that brought 'em in, rather than the Convictions of their Conſcience. In the Reign of *Ahaſuerus* we have Authentic Evidence, That *many of the People of his Land became* Jews; *for the Fear of the* Jews *fell upon them*, Eſth. viii. 17. I ſuppoſe, we may ſafely take it on the Credit of *Joſephus*

That the whole Nation of the *Edomites*, *Eſau*'s Poſterity, were proſelyted to the Church in the Reign of *Hyrcanus*; and the *Itureans* in the Days of his Son *Ariſtobulus*. And Mr. *Gale* from *Ganz*, a Rabbinical Hiſtorian, quotes this Paſſage: "At "the Year 3670. many great and powerful Cities "became the Allies of *Alexander*, the Brother of "*Ariſtobulus*, and were circumcis'd." Circumciſion was not, therefore, the diſcriminating Badge between *Abraham*'s Natural Seed, and all other Nations in the World; ſince abundance of Perſons, that were none of his Deſcendants, were circumciſed, and God was not careful by a Sacred Rite to diſtinguiſh loſt and carnal Men, from their Fellow-Reprobates. That Ordinance always accompanied thoſe who were *Abraham*'s Spiritual Seed by Calling and Profeſſion. And tho' it can never be made out, that *Iſhmael*, *Eſau*, and *Keturah*'s Sons, were, in Perſon, abſolutely and eternally reprobated; yet, if it could be done, they were by Right and Title within the Limits of the Covenant when circumcis'd, becauſe born of faithful Parents. For Privilege ſtill follows Profeſſion and external Evidence, unleſs it grows ſo ſcandalous as to come actually under the Cenſures of the Law.

In all this Account, as we find that Circumciſion was not appropriated to the Legal Covenant; ſo we find nothing in the Old Teſtament importing it to be an Ordinance that entred People into that Covenant, and bound them to the Obſervation of its Precepts. A Condition it was præ requiſite to the Keeping of the Paſſover, and to religious Communion with the Jewiſh Church, but no Tie or Obligation to the Legal Ceremonies. Four hundred and thirty Years it ſign'd the Covenant of Grace before the other was in Being, or its Futurity ſignified by the leaſt Intimation; and in the ſame Uſe it continued, according to God's Intent, throughout the

the whole *Mosaical* Dispensation. For, *Circumcision was not of* Moses, *but of the Fathers*, Joh. vii. 22.

The Law itself, in its positive Institutions, was no Part of the Patriarchal Covenant; nor design'd at first to be given as a distinct Oeconomy of Religion, but was afterwards occasionally super-induc'd to the former Covenant. And for what Reason? Not to fulfil any previous Promise, or Præ-engagement of God, nor to comply with his own antecedent Purpose; but to chastise the Sins of a refractory People, to tame their Wantonness, and to keep 'em well employ'd at home, that their roving Spirits might not ramble after strange Gods, and strange Religions, for want of full and better Work in their own Church. This Reason St. *Paul* assigns for its Use and Origin, *Gal.* iii. 19. *Wherefore then serveth the Law?* It *was added because of Transgressions: To punish former Sins, and prevent 'em for the future.* And God himself declares, *Ezek.* xx. 25. that because of their Idolatries and gross Violations of his Moral Precepts, He *gave them Statutes that were not good, and Judgments whereby they should not live.* And it has been the Opinion of some Learned Men, that if the *Jews* had not worshipp'd the Golden Calf, and discover'd their incurable Proclivity to other Sins, they had receiv'd no more Precepts than the Ten Commandments. Sacrifices themselves were not the main original Design of God in his Legislature to those People; *Jer.* vii. 22, 23. Much less other Ritual Ordinances of lesser moment.

Yet tho' the Law was an Expedient to keep them from Idolatry and Trangression, in another respect it multiplied their Sins, by multiplying their Duties, which they were not able to perform. For *the Law entred, that the Offence might abound*, Rom. v. 20. Which is taught more at large, ch. vii. 8, *&c.* As, therefore, the Law was only a temporary and occasional

caſional Model of Religion ſuper-added to the Covenant of Grace, ſo Circumciſion, which was originally appropriated to that Covenant, became annex'd to the Legal, as a particular Precept, not as an initiating Ordinance to it. For, whatſoever Regard and Uſe it had in the Law, it could bear no older a Date, than the Law it ſelf; and ſo was but a ſecondary and poſterior Uſe, brought in upon Emergency.

But the *Jews* in After-times, did, of their own Heads, and without Scripture-Warrant, introduce a new Doctrine concerning it into their Church. For they laid a moſt extravagant Streſs on their poſitive Ordinances. A ſolemn Rite of Admiſſion into their Church and Legal Oeconomy, and an Obligation to keep its Precepts, they made it to be. And becauſe this was with them a current and prevailing Opinion of ſome Standing, St. *Paul* does but graft upon their Sentiments, when he preſſes the Judaizing Chriſtians, who entertained ſtill the ſame Thoughts about this Matter with their unbelieving Countrymen, and ſays, *Gal.* v. 2, 3, 4. *I teſtify again to every one that is circumciſed, that he is a Debtor to do the whole Law; that Chriſt will profit him nothing, and is become to him of none Effect; and that he is fallen from Grace.* They among Chriſt's Diſciples, whom St. *Paul* does there diſpute againſt, were of this Perſuaſion; That the Law muſt all be kept by circumcis'd Perſons, and that both Circumciſion and Obedience to the Law, were indiſpenſably neceſſary to Salvation, *Acts* xv. 1, 5, 24. and *ch.* xxi. 20.

But if St. *Paul* had been himſelf of this Mind, That Circumciſion did, by its intrinſic Uſe and Nature, neceſſarily bind to keep the Law, he would never have ſpoken of Circumciſion as of a thing, in itſelf, ſo very indifferent and inſignificant, as he does ſoon after, *Gal.* v. 6. and vi. 15. For it muſt have avail'd and ſignified as much as Chriſt and his ſaving Grace were worth, if, by God's Deſign and its own

own Nature, it bound to the Obſervance of the whole Law, and cut off all circumciſed Perſons from Chriſt and Grace. Nor would the Apoſtle, in compliance with ſome, who, perhaps, were not ſo deeply and incurably tinctur'd with thoſe Opinions, have yielded to circumciſe *Timothy*, if thereby he muſt make him ſuch a deplorable Debtor to the Law; when, we know, he refus'd the circumciſing of *Titus*, to humour Men that were poſſeſs'd with thoſe Miſ-perſuaſions. And if Circumciſion muſt really have that Meaning and neceſſary Conſequence, what became of thoſe Fifteen Biſhops of *Jeruſalem*, with their Flocks, who in the firſt Centuries were circumcis'd, as we are inform'd by Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory?

All which ſhews, That St. *Paul*'s different Conduct and Doctrine in that Affair, depended not on the Nature and true Intent of Circumciſion itſelf, but on the different Opinions, or Tempers, of the Perſons he had to deal with, who were oblig'd to act according to their preſent Judgments. For, as he ſays, *Rom.* xiv. 14. *To him that eſteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean*: So to him that eſteemeth any thing to be a Truth, or Duty, to him it is a Truth, or Duty, ſo long as he remains under thoſe Convictions. Therefore, he argues againſt thoſe Judaizing Chriſtians only upon their own Principles. For, to Men who had throughly imbib'd ſuch Notions, as to believe Circumciſion was a Bond, to keep the whole *Moſaical* Law, and that both together were neceſſary Conditions of Juſtification to eternal Life, he juſtly affirms, That they became Debtors to do the whole Law by Virtue of their own Act and Opinions; That they were fallen from Grace; that Chriſt was become of none Effect to them, and would profit them nothing. Whereas, by God's Appointment, and in its own Nature, Circumciſion had no ſuch Uſe and Signification, either under the Old or New Teſtament. This, then, is nothing elſe, but what we call, *Ar-*

gumentum ad hominem, whereby we preſs our Opponents with Abſurdities and Inconveniencies flowing from their own receiv'd, but erroneous Tenets. And ſo I hope this Rub is cleared off.

Would we imitate the *Baptiſts* Modeſty and laudable Way of Reaſoning, I believe, we might, with greater Probability of Truth from God's Word, infer, That Baptiſm was a Legal Rite, which initiated the *Jews* into the Profeſſion of the *Moſaical* Law, and bound 'em to its Obedience, than it is inferr'd, that Circumciſion was ſuch a Rite. For, *baptiz'd the* Jews *were unto* Moſes *in the Cloud and in the Sea*; Which is not *Rabbinical*, but *Apoſtolical* Doctrine, 1 *Cor.* x. 2. Faith was then wrought in their Hearts by the Miracle which they ſaw; ſo that *they believed the Lord, and his Servant* Moſes, *Exod.* xiv. 31. God's Mouth and Miniſter extraordinary they thereupon accounted *Moſes*, and to his Commands and Diſcipline they reſign'd, *Exod.* xix. 8. and xx. 19. and xxiv. 3, 7. and *Deut.* v. 37. With much better Colour of Truth might we, therefore, affirm, that Baptiſm oblig'd to the Legal Covenant, than our Adverſaries affirm, that Circumciſion did.

And thus Circumciſion, tho' it was injoyn'd by a freſh Command of *Moſes*, *Lev.* xii. 3. and practiſed in the *Judaic* Church under the Law, as an antecedent Qualification to the Paſſover, and, conſequently, to religious Communion, remain'd to our Saviour's Days a Seal of the Covenant made with *Abraham*, and rather ſign'd his Spiritual, than his Natural Seed. For, as the Apoſtle ſays, That *the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years after, could not diſannul the Covenant*; ſo neither could it deſtroy the Seal, nor divert it to a contrary Uſe. Elſe, by taking off the Seal from the proper Covenant, and affixing it to one that was of an oppoſite Nature, it muſt, by Conſequence, have diſannull'd the Co-

venant, which is of no Force when ſtript of its confirming Seal and Ceremony, any more than a Will or Teſtament that is unſign'd.

It is now Time to examine Mr. *Tombs*'s Strong Lines and Unanſwerable Arguments, as his Seconds call them, to prove Circumciſion to be a pure Legal Rite, that ſign'd the Covenant of Works, not of Grace. For Numbers they are ſomewhat formidable, amounting to about half a Score; but their Strength being already broken, they will be eaſily encountred and overthrown. For they are grounded moſtly upon the Oppoſition lying between the Evangelical and Legal Covenant, which St. *Paul* inſiſts on in his Epiſtles. *Chriſt* he oppoſes to *Moſes*, the *Goſpel* to the *Law*, and the *Covenant of Grace* to *That of Works*, ſtrictly and preciſely taken as given to the *Jews* on Mount *Sinai*, and as bound upon them by Circumciſion, according to their own Divinity. But he makes no Oppoſition between *Abraham* and *Chriſt*, or the *Abrahamical* Covenant and the *Evangelical*; between which Two there was always a fair Agreement and Correſpondence, or, rather, a Sameneſs and Identity. If, therefore, the Circumciſion of the Fleſh is by St. *Paul* oppos'd to Chriſt and Goſpel Grace, the Oppoſition cannot be founded on its primitive Uſe in ſigning the Gracious Covenant made with *Abraham*, this being purely that of the Goſpel; but upon a Secondary Uſe it had among the later *Jews* in ſigning the Legal Covenant, according to their Traditional Doctrine. For ſince this Uſe of Circumciſion was introduc'd by them in poſterior Ages, and the Judaizing Chriſtians expected Juſtification that way, it was neceſſary for the Apoſtle to argue againſt them upon that Foundation, and undeceive 'em in their Errors. As this ſerves for a Key to open St. *Paul*'s Meaning; ſo the obſerving of it, will greatly help to overthrow our Adverſaries Arguments urg'd againſt us, which are to this Effect.

1. They tell us; "The Covenant ſeal'd by Circumciſion, was not a Covenant of Grace, but "was made to ſeparate the Natural Seed of *Abraham* from all other Nations in the World, and "to inſure to them the Poſſeſſion of the promiſed "Land." This is refuted before, and needs no farther Anſwer.

2. "The Covenant of Grace did not belong to ſome "that were circumciſed; as, not to *Iſhmael*, *Eſau*, and "the Sons of *Keturah*." Which has been alſo anſwered. For they may as well plead, that Baptiſm does not initiate into the Covenant of Grace, becauſe it was adminiſtred to *Judas*, as they tell us, to *Simon Magus*, and to abundance of Perſons that prov'd flagitious Sinners, Heretics, Shiſmatics, Apoſtates and Reprobates, and therefore fell under the Rebukes and Cenſures of Chriſt's Apoſtles.

3. The next Argument, as it is call'd, repeats the ſame Story; "That the Covenant of Circumciſion was not a Covenant of Grace, becauſe it "belonged to the fleſhly and ungodly Seed of *Abraham*; as, to *Iſhmael*, *&c.*" After this way of Management, Syllogiſms and Arguments, like *Abraham*'s Seed, may become as the Stars in the Sky, and as the Sands on the Sea-ſhore for Multitude. But all thoſe circumciſed Perſons were Children of believing Parents, and, by Preſumption, intitled to the Covenant and its Seal. And this is the juſt Latitude we demand for the Application of the new Seal of Baptiſm. For if our Antagoniſts could prove, there were ever ſo many Reprobates admitted into the *Abrahamical* Covenant by Circumciſion, they would not prejudice ours, but their own Cauſe.

4. "All that are in the Covenant of Grace, do "know the Lord, from the greateſt of them to the "leaſt, *Jer.* xxxi. 32, 33, 34. But circumciſed In"fants could not know the Lord; Therefore, Cir"cumciſion could not be the Covenant of Grace.

Neither

" Neither can Infants now know the Lord; and, " conſequently, they are not in the Covenant of " Grace, nor proper Subjects for Chriſtian Bap- " tiſm." Adieu then to their Salvation. For if they be not ſav'd by the Covenant of Grace, in which they never were, nor can be, may they be ſav'd by the Covenant of Works? So that if this Argument proves any thing, it proves a great deal too much, and cannot poſſibly have any Force. But it is to be noted, that in the ſame Quotation from the Prophet, theſe Words occur; *And they ſhall teach no more every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother, ſaying, Know the Lord.* Let the *Baptiſts* put a Conſtruction upon theſe Words that is agreeable to Their Practice in teaching their baptiz'd Believers, whom they ſuppoſe to be in the Covenant of Grace, and we will undertake to anſwer for the other Words they alledge againſt us. But, 'till they do that, we are not bound to gratify them in their Cavils, any more than Chriſt thought himſelf oblig'd to anſwer the Prieſts and Rulers Challenge about his Authority, when he put a Queſtion to 'em about *John*'s Baptiſm, and they could not anſwer him. I uſe not this for a Shift to wave the Objection, which we can eaſily remove when we pleaſe, but to expoſe the Folly of the Objectors.

5. Says our Adverſary, " Circumciſion was a part " of the Covenant of Works, binding to the Obſer- " vation of the *Moſaical* Law, *Gal.* v. 3. and ſo " could not be the Covenant of Grace." But this is already proved to be falſe.

6. The next Argument aſſerts, " Circumciſion " to be as much the Covenant of Works, as that " made with *Adam* before the Fall, or the *Sinai* Co- " venant." But I utterly deſpair to ſee the Aſſertion juſtified; and 'till that is done, our Word in the Negative, is as good as the *Baptiſts* in the Affirmative.

7. Notable

7. Notable is Mr. *Tombs*'s next Device, for which he deſerves an everlaſting Monument: For, ſays he, "Circumciſion could not be the Covenant of "Grace, becauſe *Abraham* was not juſtified in Cir-"cumciſion, but in Uncircumciſion, *Rom.* iv. 9, 10." Strong Lines indeed! and unanſwerable Arguments! For does it follow, that becauſe *Abraham*, (and he might have put in *Melchiſedec*, *Job*, *Lot*, and all the Righteous Men that liv'd before) was juſtified without the Uſe of a Rite, which was not then ordain'd, no Man is, or can be juſtified in the Uſe of it afterwards? Or, That it could not belong to the Covenant of Grace, becauſe Grace might be obtain'd another Way, when that Covenanting Rite was not inſtituted? Was Circumciſion really incompatible with Juſtifying and Saving Grace? If ſo, what tender Heart ſhould not ake for the circumciſed *Hebrews*, who were all deſtroyed by that Ordinance? I wiſh theſe ſhrewd Logicians may not at length unanſwerably prove, That Baptiſm cannot be an Ordinance belonging to the Covenant of Grace, becauſe *Abraham*, and Thouſands more, as we charitably hope, were not juſtified in Baptiſm, but while they were unbaptiz'd. For the Argument does this, as much as the other.

8. "The Law, or Covenant of Circumciſion, "being contra-diſtinguiſhed and oppos'd by the "Apoſtle to the Righteouſneſs of Faith, *Rom.* iv. "12, 13. could not be a Covenant of Faith, or the "Goſpel Covenant." Very true. But Circumciſion, in its primary Uſe, at leaſt, was an Ordinance of the pure Evangelical Covenant made with *Abraham*; and if it came to be annex'd to the Legal Covenant afterwards, as a binding Initiatory Rite, and in that Senſe counted neceſſary to Juſtification; it was only in the Opinion of Men, by Virtue of which alone it ſtood oppoſite unto Grace. The Law diſannull'd not the gracious Covenant made with *Abraham*;

Abraham, nor took off its Seal; but both continu'd in Force 'till our Saviour's Time; and had he thought it proper, he might have cancell'd the Law, and retain'd the Seal in its primitive Use. Then had it no more oppos'd Evangelical Grace, except in the erroneous Divinity of *Jews* and *Judaizing Christians*, than it did before the Law was given. Men, by their Mis-conceptions, may give a wrong Turn to the Divine Institutions; but the Word and Purpose of God will stand fast.

9. Upon the same Thing does the following Argument turn; "Circumcision impos'd a Yoke of Bon-"dage, and could not therefore appertain to the "Covenant of Grace." In the Sense of the later *Jews* it did so, who thought it oblig'd to the Observation of the whole *Mosaical* Law, and that both were necessary to Salvation; but never in its own Nature and original Intent, while it always seal'd the *Abrahamical* Covenant down to Christ.

10. The last Argument is imploy'd, "to banish "*Hagar*, *Ishmael*, and the fleshly Seed from *Canaan* "and the Church of God, as far as *Arabia*." And thither let them go, so long as *Abraham*, with the Evangelical Covenant and spiritual Seed, may stay behind. For I am no Advocate for the Bondwoman and her slavish Children, in the Allegorical Explication or Reddition: I mean, Not for the Law of *Moses* and the servile Church of the *Jews*, which were typically signified by *Hagar* and *Ishmael*; but for the Gospel Church and Covenant, as they were preach'd to *Abraham*, and sign'd with the Seal of Grace call'd Circumcision.

These are the terrible Arguments of our Adversaries, and if they were never yet answer'd, as some say, I believe the Reason was not because they could not, but because they were not worth it. However, I have accepted the Challenge, and condescended to please them, tho' it might be needless.

I have

I have ſome few Things more to obſerve, before I proceed to the Fourth Head.

1. Some of our Antagoniſts will by no means allow Baptiſm to be a Seal of the Covenant of Grace, becauſe it is no where called ſo in Scripture; but the holy Spirit is with Them the only Seal of that Covenant. Yet theſe ſame Men do ſtrenuouſly plead, That Circumciſion was a Seal of the Legal Covenant, and a Sign of giving the Law. My Demand upon them is, Where do they find thoſe Terms, or a Tittle of that Doctrine in the Scripture? If the holy Spirit be a Seal of the Covenant of Grace, it is a Seal that is inward and inviſible. And was he not always the Seal of that Covenant? For how can Saving Grace be among lapſed Men, where the Spirit of Grace is not? And how alſo, ſince the Fall, could the People of God ever be without that Covenant?

But theſe Gentlemen ought to know, that Things are to receive their Names from their Uſe and Nature; or, if poſitive Rites they be, from the End and Deſign of their Inſtitution. Now it is granted on all ſides, that Baptiſm ſo far ſucceeds Circumciſion, as to be the initiating Ordinance into the Evangelical Church and Covenant, whereby God and Baptized Perſons ſtand mutually engag'd to one another; and this gives it the Uſe and Nature of a Seal. For by the very Act of Entrance into the Church and Covenant ſolemnly made on the one ſide, and by a preſum'd Acceptance on the other ſide, the Perſons baptiz'd do either expreſly in Word, or virtually in Deed, promiſe Faith and Obedience unto God; and He, by their Admittance in, aſſures them of the Graces and Bleſſings of the Covenant; which he never fails to perform, provided they themſelves do not obſtruct it. So the Covenant is tranſacted by Stipulation and Re-ſtipulation. Then the external viſible Rite that is us'd to ſignify and confirm the mutual Engage-

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ments, must be counted the proper Seal of that Covenant; it being the Use and Nature of a Seal to confirm and ratify, as it is the Use and Nature of a Sign to signify. Ever since God form'd a visible and organiz'd Church to himself in the Days of *Abraham*, the Covenant was not without a Seal: And why it should not still have such an external Seal, to insure the Persons admitted into it of God's Favour, and distinguish them from professed Infidels, seems unaccountable; especially, when Christ has appointed a Sacrament as an Initiatory Rite into his Church, which may conveniently serve for that End. Nor is it any material Objection against this Use, that Baptism makes no visible lasting Impression on the Body, as Circumcision did. For among all the Forms and Ceremonies that God us'd to confirm the Promises of his Covenants; as, The Tree of Life, The Rain-bow, Sacrifices, The Oath of Confirmation, and, if there be any more, That lasting Impression on the Flesh, was peculiar only to Circumcision.

Of the same Weight is another Objection, which is urg'd to shew, "That neither Circumcision, nor "Baptism, could be Seals to the Covenant of Grace, "because many graceless Persons have been Partakers of those Ordinances, and God cannot affix his "Seal unto a Lye." What need we observe here, that Covenants are made upon Conditions, which if one Party breaks, the other is discharg'd by the very Nature and Tenor of the Covenant? The Default is always on Mens side. For, let God be true, but every Man a Lyar; and if they deny Him, He is faithful, and cannot deny Himself. To such Covenant-breakers he declares, *Ye shall know my Breach of Promise*, Num. xiv. 34. God's Promises are no less sacred and inviolable, than his Oaths and Seals. Was not that, therefore, a most solemn Promise, which he made by Covenant, of *circumcising the Heart of the Jews, and the Heart of their Seed*, &c? *Deut.* xxx. 6. Yet, see the Event

Event it had thro' their Perverſeneſs: *All the Houſe of* Iſrael *are uncircumciſed in the Heart*, Jer. ix. 26. *Ye ſtiff-necked and uncircumciſed in Heart and Ears, ye do always reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt; as your Fathers did, ſo do ye*, Acts vii. 51.

But if what is here ſaid, be not ſufficient to ſatisfy the *Baptiſts*, that Baptiſm is a Seal of the Covenant of Grace, I deſire them to be determin'd by their own Doctrine, which from our Church they have adopted into their Articles of the Chriſtian Faith. Wherein, N°. 27. They affirm, "That by Baptiſm the Promiſes of Forgiveneſs of "Sin, and of our Adoption to be the Sons of God by "the Holy Ghoſt, are viſibly ſigned and ſealed."

2. In *Abraham* it was an antecedent, not a ſubſequent Faith, or Righteouſneſs by Faith, that was ſeal'd by Circumciſion. This ſome deny of all other Perſons beſide himſelf. But it is highly incredible; becauſe *Iſhmael* being circumciſed at the Age of Thirteen Years, it is not to be ſuppos'd that the excellent Father would ſuffer him all that Time to be educated in Infidelity; nor that thoſe Hundreds of adult Males he maintain'd in his Service, were all Unbelievers at their Circumciſion; nor all the Proſelytes in future Times to be no better than egregious Hypocrites. Faith in Sincerity many of them had before, and that was ſign'd by Circumciſion. And to Infants that Rite ſign'd God's faithful Promiſe of Grace to circumciſe the Heart, and work it up into Faith and Obedience, which on his part was very ſure; ſince in Stipulations and Contracts the Seals annex'd, oblige all Parties to the Performance of the reſpective Conditions. *Abraham* is, indeed, the only Perſon mention'd in Scripture, whoſe Righteouſneſs of Faith going before, Circumciſion ſeal'd. And the Reaſon is, Becauſe he, in a moſt eminent Degree, was the choice Friend and Favourite of God, the Head of his Family, the viſible

visible Church at that Time, the Father of the Faithful in succeeding Generations, and their shining Pattern and Exemplar. Also the History of his pious Life is particularly recorded in Holy Writ for our Benefit, while the Lives of other Believers, that were circumcised with him, are pass'd over in Silence, by reason they were of inferior Note and Quality, except his Steward *Eliezer* of *Damascus*: who, if he was the same with that eldest Servant and Steward of his House, *Gen.* xxiv. 2. (as *Menochius* and others probably hold) was a very faithful and religious Person.

3. Some running upon their wild and groundless Notions, affirm, The Patriarchal Covenant, and the Oeconomy of Religion depending on it, which they strongly fancy to be the Legal, was all dissolv'd by Christ at the preaching of the Gospel. Their Design herein is to shew, That we cannot argue from thence for the Admission of Infants into Covenant in the Gospel-Times, since that whole Frame and Scheme is now demolish'd. But this is impossible to be true, because that Covenant and Oeconomy was not Legal, but Evangelical; which Christ came to confirm and complete, not to destroy. Enlargements we find made in it by Christ, actually to take in all Nations, according to the Promise of that Covenant; rather than Retrenchments, to bar out those that were receiv'd in before.

4. The Covenant continuing still in full Force, the Change of the Seal could make no Alteration in its Terms, Nature and Contents. Christ had good Reason to change the Seal, as is obvious to all that will but consider. But no Reason had he to change the spiritual and everlasting Covenant of his Father, which he came not to cancel, but fulfil. Nor does the bare Change of the Seal, in its own Nature, or by virtue of the Fact, make the least Change in the Covenant itself. For this is common

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with Men to do, without invalidating the Deeds, or infringing the Rights and Privileges therein contain'd. Sovereign States do change or alter their Seals upon the Union of Kingdoms, Principalities, and the like Emergencies, by Quartering their Arms according to thoſe Acceſſions: yet if there be Occaſion to renew Charters and Patents to their Subjects, the ſetting a new Seal to thoſe Deeds alters not their Nature, nor retrenches ought of the old Privileges. The ſame holds true in Contracts, Covenants and all Obligations between the Subjects. They uſe what Seals they pleaſe, and that makes no Difference ſo long as the Deeds are valid in themſelves, and legally executed. So the Rights remain as they were, notwithſtanding the Alteration of the Seals. And why not the ſame in God's Covenant, tho' Circumciſion be chang'd for Baptiſm?

IV. I come now to ſhew, *How the Right of Infants to be admitted into the Evangelical Church and Covenant by the proper Ordinance, reſults from the Promiſes.* For the *Abrahamical* Covenant, which continu'd in Force from the Patriarchs down to Chriſt, throughout the *Judaic* Diſpenſation, being the very ſame Evangelical Covenant we have at preſent, only with an Alteration of the Seal, larger Explications of the Contents, and an Overture of it made to all Nations; it follows, That thoſe Infants of Profeſs'd Believers, who had, by God's Order, a long and uninterrupted Poſſeſſion of the Covenant-Rights and Privileges, muſt have the ſame ſtill, unleſs it can be clearly prov'd that God has ſince diſpoſſeſs'd them. It was ſettled upon them as a ſure Entail by a free Grant or Act of Grace, which to this Day, does not appear to be annull'd; and confirm'd they always were in their ancient Claim and Right by the proper Seal and fœderal Ordinance. And, therefore, tho' the Seal be chang'd, yet thoſe Infants having a fœderal

ral Relation unto God their Father, as born of *Abraham*'s Spiritual Seed, they have, by God's Law and Appointment, the same original Right to the covenanting Seal, that the Seed of *Abraham* ever had. Consequently, they ought to be solemnly initiated into their old Covenant of Grace by Christian Baptism, which now succeeds Circumcision for that Purpose. For I take it to be a certain Rule, That the same Covenant will always receive into it the same Persons, in the same Capacities and Qualifications. And this, as the Lawyers and Civilians speak, being not an Odious, but a Favourable Case, vesting People in signal Privileges, the largest and most extensive Construction should be put on the Law, or Grant, that the Terms thereof will reasonably bear. Whereas, in Odious or Hard Cases alone, they are for Retrenchments and Limitations.

But before I come close to this Point, I am oblig'd to consider some Difficulties and Obstructions which our Adversaries have cast in our Way. Mr. *Tombs*, Mr. *Keach* and Mr. *Gale* deny Baptism to succeed Circumcision. The two first will not allow Baptism also to be a covenanting Seal and Ordinance, whatever the last does. Circumcision, as they say, did not fore-run Baptism, but was typical of the inward Circumcision of the Heart; nor has Baptism the same Use in the Christian Church, that Circumcision had among the *Jews*. Therefore, can we draw no just Inferences from the one Ordinance to the other, because they are not Parallels; or, if we attempt to do it, they threaten to run us into Absurdities. And they ground themselves for this on the Scripture's Silence, which no where calls Baptism Circumcision, nor says, that it succeeds unto it.

Well may we be amaz'd at this Doctrine. For what if we have not express Words in Scripture, so long as Things themselves are there? If Baptism cannot succeed Circumcision, because it does not

bear its Name, it follows as well, that one Sovereign cannot ſucceed another, unleſs he be his Name-ſake, We allow Baptiſm to be a different Rite from Circumciſion, and if, in ſome Particulars, it has a different Uſe, it may ſtill ſucceed it in other Uſes; elſe, the *Chriſtian* Prieſthood could not ſucceed the *Levitical*, nor our *Lord's Supper* the *Jews Paſſover*, nor any Antitype its proper Type and Figure; becauſe they have not the ſame Names, nor are exactly parallel in all their Uſes. Yet between Baptiſm and Circumciſion is there Agreement enough in their main Uſes, Purpoſes, and Significations, to give one a Right to ſucceed the other, and prove it to be a covenanting Ceremony. For,

1. As Circumciſion formerly initiated the People of God into his Church, ſo it is acknowledged by our Adverſaries, that Baptiſm now does. Then,

2. If into the Church of Chriſt it admits Baptiz'd Perſons, and makes them viſible Members of his Body, it brings them alſo viſibly within the Covenant of Grace, as Circumciſion did, and intitles them to its Privileges. For as this Covenant was given for the Church's Benefit, and not for Infidels; ſo Church-Members have an apparent, or Preſumptive Right unto its Benefits, and none but They. Becauſe the Charter of Grace being iſſued out to the Citizens of that holy Corporation, to be within the Church, and within the Covenant, are Terms that have a neceſſary Connexion with one another.

3. The Nature and Deſign of Baptiſm beſpeak it to be ſuch a ſtipulating Ceremony, as Circumciſion was. For none can enter by Baptiſm into the Church, without being ſuppos'd to undertake the ſincere Profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and to ſtipulate with God to live accordingly. Dedicated he is by that Act to the Service of God, and to Faith in the adorable Trinity. God alſo muſt be ſuppos'd to accept of the Perſon, to adopt him for his Child, and to ingage himſelf to beſtow

beſtow upon him the Graces and Bleſſings of the Covenant, according to the Terms preſcribed in the Goſpel. And this whole Affair is ſolemnly tranſacted between the appointed Miniſter on God's Part, and the Baptized Party on his own, or by thoſe that have a Right to act and covenant in his Name. So there are both Preſentation, and Acceptance, which amount to a mutual Obligation. Not to mention Verbal Stipulations, which are the ſacred Promiſes of God's Word, and the ſolemn Engagements of Baptized Perſons. Baptiſm muſt, therefore, have the Uſe and Nature of a covenanting Ordinance, and ſerve for that End, as an external Seal: Much alike as it was with Sacrifices in ancient Times. The bare Act of offering them to God, and his Acceptance, ratified the Covenant, and ſuffic'd for reciprocal Pledges, without any farther Formalities of Expreſſions, *Pſal.* l. 5. *Gen.* xv. 9, *&c.*

4. As the Carnal Circumciſion among the *Jews* ſignified the Spiritual, and was an Inſurance of Grace for this End; ſo has Baptiſm the ſame Signification among Chriſtians. Our Adverſaries are under a groſs Miſtake, when they affirm the Outward Circumciſion to be typical of the Inward; whereas it was, indeed, ſymbolical of it. Between both which there is, in Propriety of Speech, great Difference. For the Types of Scripture repreſented Things that were future, material, and ſenſible: But Symbols repreſented Things that were preſent, ſpiritual, or moral. And this Signification the Carnal Circumciſion always had in the Old Teſtament; as Baptiſm has in the New. The Scripture Expreſſions are ſufficiently ſtrong and clear to make it a fœderal Rite, or matriculating Ordinance, that initiates into the Church, and, conſequently, into the Covenant, and inveſts in all the ſpiritual Privileges of the Goſpel. For thus we read of Baptiſm:

That *in it we put on Chriſt, and are made the Children of God; are incorporated into his Body, the Church; are ſanctified, cleanſed, and juſtified, by receiving Remiſſion of Sins, which are there waſh'd away; are dead and buried unto Sin with Chriſt, and with him riſen again to Newneſs of Life; are regenerated, or born of Water and the Spirit; are baptized into the Faith and Worſhip of the holy Trinity, and thereby made Chriſt's Diſciples*; and, finally, *by Baptiſm we are ſaved.* All this is certainly true, when we take the whole Ordinance together in the outward Sign and the inward Grace. For we depend not on the *Romaniſts Opus operatum*, nor on the bare internal Incomes of *Enthuſiaſts.* God muſt work his Will for our Salvation in his own Way, and we muſt not divide and mangle his holy Ordinances in our Accounts. Sincere he always is in his Overtures of Grace to Mankind; and if they be falſe in their Tranſactions with him, that evacuates not the Sincerity of his gracious Intentions, nor puts in any juſt Exception to the Efficacy of his Ordinances.

But if, after all, our Antagoniſts are not ſatisfied by what is here advanced, I hope they will ſtand to their own Doctrine; which they have openly publiſhed in theſe Words: " Sacraments ordained of " Chriſt, be not only Badges, or Tokens of Chri- " ſtian Mens Profeſſion; but rather they be certain " ſure Witneſſes, and effectual Signs of Grace, and " God's good Will towards us, by the which he doth " work inviſibly in us, and doth not only quicken, " but alſo ſtrengthen and confirm our Faith in " him." *Article of the Chriſtian Faith* XXV. Are they not then Aſſurances of Grace on God's Part, as well as Badges and Tokens of Profeſſion on Mens Part? And what Senſe, or Conſtruction, will this Language bear, but that they are mutual Engagements and Stipulations between God and Men in the Way of Covenant?

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Wherefore, since there is so much Agreement between the two Ordinances, in their Uses and Designs, we conclude, That Baptism is come in the room of Circumcision, and is succedaneous to it, as a covenanting Ceremony.

Some of our Adversaries take much Pains to shew the Differences between the two Ordinances. And who denies that Point? Otherwise, if they did not differ at all, they must be the same. And to what Purpose? For, cannot Two Ordinances correspond in any thing, because they do not correspond in all Things? Or, may not one succeed the other in its principal Uses, because in some Uses and Respects of lesser Note, they disagree? Then could not *Christ*'s Priesthood succeed *Aaron*'s, nor his Sacrifice the *Levitical*, nor his Church and Service the *Judaical*, nor any Antitype its Type and Shadow, because in some, or in several Respects, they differ from one another, as was observ'd before.

Again, "Baptism could not succeed Circumcision, "because they co-existed for some Time; People be- "ing circumcised according to the Law, and also "Baptiz'd by *John* and *Christ*." How then could King *William* III. succeed Queen *Mary* in the whole Government, seeing that for some Years they reign'd together. History gives us Instances of Bishops sitting together in the same Sees, and of Emperors on the same Thrones, for a Time, 'till at last, some leaving the World, left their Partners that surviv'd, to succeed them in their whole Power and Offices. This Argument, therefore, proves weak in Civil Polity; nor is it stronger in Divinity: For, Christ's Priesthood and Sacrifice succeeded the *Aaronical*; yet they both co-existed for some Time. For, after Christ's Crucifixion, when his Sacrifice was offer'd, and his Priesthood commenc'd, we find the Apostles convented before the High-Priests of the *Jews*, and answering for themselves without denying or impeaching

their Authority; and St. *Paul* in Tract of ſome Years following, beſpeaking Reverence to one of them on the account of his Function, *Acts* xxiii. 5. So did the Chriſtian Church and Service ſuceeed that of the Temple. Yet did the Apoſtles and Diſciples, after the Chriſtian Church and Service were founded, continue daily to frequent the Temple-Worſhip; to obſerve the *Jews* Hours of Prayer, and their Feaſt of *Pentecoſt:* to undertake their Religious Vows, ſhave their Heads, make their Oblations, and ſubmit to other Legal Ceremonies, when they ſaw convenient. I think, it was the Deſtruction of the Temple, and the whole *Jewiſh* Polity, that put a full End to the Legal Oeconomy, which 'till then was tolerated, or counted lawful. Upon that the Chriſtian Religion took place alone, and was, in Point of Right, without a Rival. Circumciſion, indeed, was ſtubborn and reſtive enough to quit its Place; but at length it yielded among Chriſtians, and gave way to Baptiſm.

But what Nonſenſe and Falſhood is this which follows! "The Antitype which came in the Room of "the Circumciſion of the Fleſh, is the Circumciſion "of the Heart." Did it come in its Room? Then, according to their own Doctrine, it could have no Room 'till the Carnal Circumciſion was quite remov'd. And poor carnal *Jews* indeed were they, who knew nothing of the Circumciſion of the Heart; the Patriarchs, *Moſes* and the Prophets, who inculcated ſome ſuch thing in Words, not excepted! But the Spiritual Circumciſion is no more an Antitype to the Carnal, than Regeneration is an Antitype unto Baptiſm. For neither of the Two Ordinances are to be counted Typical of the inward Circumciſion, but Symbolical. And, if my Judgment fails me not, between Types and their Antitypes, there muſt be ſome external Reſemblance, of which the inward Operations of the Heart are not capable. But certain it

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is, that the Grace or Vertue signified by the Circumcision of the Heart, was not only requir'd from the first Institution of the Carnal, but from the Creation of the World, in all People that would please God. And if true it was, as it is undoubtedly false, that the inward Circumcision is the Antitype to the outward, then could a Type and its Antitype subsist together, not only from *John*'s Baptism to our Saviour's Passion, but from *Abraham*'s Days down to Christ's.

There is a Place we make Use of, *Col.* ii. 11, 12. which Mr. *Tombs*, Mr. *Gale* and others, have vex'd and tortur'd with all their Power. The Words are these: *In whom also ye are circumcised with the Circumcision made without Hands, in putting off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh, by the Circumcision of Christ; Buried, or being Buried with him in Baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him thro' the Faith of the Operation* of God, who hath raised him from the Dead. The Apostle says, That this was done in the Ordinance of Baptism. All, therefore, that I request of those Gentlemen, is, that they will grant me Baptism to be Symbolical of the Circumcision of the Heart, as the Carnal Circumcision was. And if this they will not grant, I can command it from them in spite of their Hearts. For what is meant by those Metaphorical Expressions, *Being buried and raised with Christ in Baptism*, but Sanctification of the Heart and Life, which we call *Regeneration, Circumcision of the Heart*, or *a Dying to Sin, and a Rising again to a Newness of Life?* And does not the outward Ordinance of Baptism represent and signify this, according to the *Antipædobaptists* own Doctrine set down before concerning the Sacraments? Symbolical, therefore, it is of *the Circumcision made without Hands*, as the Carnal Circumcision was before; and, consequently it succeeds it in that Use and spiritual Signification; which is all that I contend for. And there I shall rest,

'till I find it deny'd and diſprov'd. For Mr. *Gale*'s Diſcourſe does not affect my Senſe of it in the leaſt, nor his Arguments conclude againſt me.

And ſo I return to ſpeak directly to the Buſineſs in hand, and infer Infant-Baptiſm from the former Grounds and Obſervations.

1. When God made the Covenant of Grace with *Abraham*, he did, in Eſſentials, give us the Plan and Platform of the Evangelical Church, as he deſign'd it ſhould continue in all Ages, the Temporal Bleſſings excepted relating to the Land of *Canaan*. But the Spiritual Privileges were to run down to the Church in an uninterrupted Courſe from thence to our Saviour's Days, and to the Conſummation of the World. For as the Covenant was everlaſting, ſo the Church founded upon it, ſhould be alſo everlaſting, when conſider'd in its Militant and Triumphant State. The Chriſtian Church is but the *Abrahamical* Church continu'd and inlarg'd. In that Model God compriz'd the Spiritual Bleſſings given by Promiſe to his peculiar People, foretold their future Communication to all Nations, appointed the Covenanting Seal and Incorporating Ordinance that ſhould be us'd 'till Chriſt came, and ſpecify'd what Perſons ſhould be receiv'd into the Church and Covenant. Theſe were not only the Adult, but alſo the Infants of all profeſſed Believers; the Males by Circumciſion, and the Females by a pure Act of Grace without the Seal, of which they were not capable. In the Males, they might be reckon'd as circumcis'd, while that Act was imputed to them, that they might avoid the great Reproach of Uncircumciſion. For, to *Abraham*'s Deſcendents, Male and Female, and to his Spiritual Seed the Proſelytes, and to their Seed's Seed throughout all Generations, did the Covenant extend; *Gen.* xvii. 7. At the Head of whom ſhould be that eminent Seed Chriſt Jeſus, and under him all profeſs'd Believers, with their Iſſue,

sue. And when the Redeemer should come out of *Sion*, this also is the Tenor of the Covenant; *My Spirit that is upon thee, and my Words which I have put in thy Mouth, shall not depart out of thy Mouth, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seed, nor out of the Mouth of thy Seed's Seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever*, Isa. lix. 20, 21.

The Patriarchal Church was the first Model of a visible organized Church we find describ'd and characteriz'd in the Scripture; and it being the Foundation, Scheme, or Rough-draught of the Evangelical Church, as now perfected, it must continue, in the main, to be the Model of Christianity. What God then contrived and promised, he would fulfil, and the perfect Accomplishment was to be in Christ. *For Christ came to perform the Mercy promised to our Fathers, and to remember his holy Covenant; the Oath which he sware to our Father* Abraham, Luke i. 72, 73. A Branch of which Covenant it was, *That the* Gentiles *should be Fellow-Heirs with the old* Israelites, *and of the same Body, and Partakers of the Spiritual Promises*, Eph. iii. 6, 9, 11. But how are they Fellow-Heirs? How are they incorporated into the same Body, and made Partakers of the Promises, if only actual Believers among them shall enjoy the covenanted Privileges, and not their Seed, as the Promises contained, and as the ancient *Israelites* did? This is to be but half Heirs, and half Partakers, and Members of the Body in an incompleted Degree, since their Seed, as such, are cut off from the ancient Claims and covenanted Rights. If it was then an Inheritance intail'd to Parents and Children together, it must be so now; or else the Intail is dock'd, the Inheritance maim'd and lessen'd, the Covenant impair'd, the Promises are clipp'd, and the Privileges diminish'd. Surely, Christ did not thus fulfil the Promises by halves, but the *Gentiles* must come in on the same Foot and Level with the

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old *Iſraelites*, as the Proſelytes always did in Spirituals.

Moſes *was faithful as a Servant in the Houſe of God, and Chriſt was faithful as a Son in his own Houſe*, Heb. iii. 2, 5, 6. *Moſes*, therefore, to expreſs his Fidelity, did all Things after the Pattern ſhewed him on the Mount, in building the Tabernacle, and modelling the Church under the legal Covenant. And, without doubt, Chriſt expreſs'd his Fidelity in modelling the Chriſtian Church according to the Evangelical Pattern given to our Father *Abraham*, without any Alterations but what were neceſſary and foretold, and what he himſelf inform'd us of. No Man was ſo well acquainted with his heavenly Father's Will; and if it had been his Father's Will, to caſt the Infants of believing Parents out of Covenant and Chuch-Communion, or debar them of Entrance thither, after the Days of Chriſt, when he threw the Doors of Grace wide open to thoſe that were not in before, I am perſuaded, Chriſt had been kind and faithful to tell us of it in plain Words, and not put People to the Shifts of deducing it by ſtrained Conſequences. For it was a material Point, which abridg'd many Millions of Infants of plain, great, and long-enjoy'd Privileges relating to Religion. Things which pious and affectionate Parents, eſpecially *Jews* with whom Chriſt convers'd, are apt to be very tender and tenacious of, in behalf of their beloved Children. I think, this was Part of his Prophetical Office to inſtruct us in; and a Word or two would have ſuffic'd. As I have obſerv'd before, of Improvements, or Inlargements made for the Benefit of Heathen Nations, conformably to the general Promiſe of the Covenant, we read in our Saviour's Goſpel; but of Retrenchments made to the Prejudice of Infants, contrary to the old Promiſe, we there read not one Syllable, tho' ſome fancy that they do.

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It remains therefore, that the Clogs and Clouds of the legal Covenant being clean removed, we are now return'd to the pure, primitive, Evangelical Church-Conſtitution, laid on the Plan of the *Abrahamical* Covenant; and, we hope, our Infants may be permitted to enjoy their ancient Privileges, wherein God has inveſted them from the Beginning, to be held intirely to the End, by virtue of his gracious Charter. And ſo we are bold to enter them into that Church and Covenant by his appointed Ordinance, agreeably to the Right he hath founded for them, and to the Rule and Pattern he hath preſcrib'd to us. For we know not a wiſer, better, and more authentic Precedent that we can follow.

2. To ſupport this Obſervation, let it be farther conſider'd, what was the Law of Proſelytiſm among the *Hebrews*. For we being Converts at firſt from the *Gentiles*, as Proſelytes were of old, do ground our Claims to Church-Privileges on the ſame Bottom that they did. In ſuch Converſions, the Firſt-fruits they were to God, and we are as the Harveſt. *Abraham*'s Seed they became thereby, and ſo are we become. Embodied they were with God's Church, and Joint-Partakers in its Privileges with the Native *Hebrews*, and the ſame it is with us. Now when they were admitted into the Church and Covenant by Circumciſion, all their Infants were admitted together with the Parents, and the Males in like manner were circumciſed. And thenceforth, in their Poſterity, they enjoy'd the ſame ſpiritual Rights with the People of God that were *Jews* by Birth. For there was one Law to the Home-born, and the converted Strangers. And this ought to be our Pattern for initiating Infants into the Church and Covenant, ſince we are introduced and ſettled upon the ſame Foundation with the Proſelytes, and like them become *Abraham*'s Children and the true *Iſraelites* in the Spirit. For we are the ſpiritual Circum-

Circumciſion, *Phil.* iii. 3. the Children of *Abraham*, and bleſſed with him, *Gal.* iii. 7, 9. And being Chriſt's, we are *Abraham*'s Seed, and Heirs according to the Promiſe, *v.* 29. as *Zaccheus* the Publican, and, probably, a *Gentile* by Birth, was the Son of *Abraham*, *Luke* xix. 9. And ſo we are now the *Iſrael* of God, *Gal.* vi. 16. For upon their Stock we ſtand, and are incovenanted into their Rights. *Many, or moſt of them being cut off for Unbelief, we are grafted into their Stem, and partake in the Root and Fatneſs of their Olive-Tree*, Rom. xi. 17. *which was their Church*, Jer. xi. 16. If, therefore, we perfectly ſucceed them in their primitive Spiritual Rights, the ſame Claim that they had for their Children to be incovenanted on the old Foundation, ſtands faſt for the Infants of Chriſtian Parents: Otherwiſe, we ſucceed them only in part, and enjoy but a Moiety of their Religious Privileges under the full Diſplay of the Covenant of Grace, and its utmoſt Completion in Chriſt Jeſus. And the Olive-Tree alſo, which was fat and fruitful to their, is become lean and barren to our Children; who, during their Infancy, ſuffer the Effects of its Leanneſs, but are abſolutely depriv'd of its Fatneſs. For no Communication have they with it, and no Nouriſhment does it give them. Then are we not treated as the ſpiritual *Iſrael* always were, but as unconverted *Gentiles* are, whoſe Children come into Covenant and Church-Communion as ſoon as they give Evidence of actual Faith, and ours, it ſeems, muſt come in no ſooner; which is no better than to un-church and un-covenant us in our Children.

Pretended it is, That Faith alone makes us the Children of *Abraham*, and the ſpiritual *Iſrael*; which Infants wanting, they cannot be *Abraham*'s Children, nor that *Iſrael*. But ſuch Qualifications as Faith and Repentance, are requiſite only in Perſons arriv'd to the Uſe of Reaſon, who ſtand ingag'd

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to Perſonal Duties and Services in the Church, as they ever ſtood in all Oeconomies of Religion; whereas Infants were allow'd to enjoy Privileges according to their Capacities, but never tied to Perſonal Performances in Matters of Duty. When *David* deſcribes a Citizen of *Zion*, or a Member of the Church of God, by theſe Characters; *That he walketh uprightly, worketh Righteouſneſs, ſpeaketh the Truth from his Heart*, &c. Pſ. xv. 2, *&c.* it would be a wrong Inference made from thence, That no Infants could be Citizens of *Zion*, or were Members of God's Church at that Time, becauſe they could have none of thoſe Qualifications. No leſs inconcluſive is it to infer, That Infants cannot now be *Abraham*'s Children, nor Members of Chriſt's Church, becauſe they want the Faith and other Properties required in adult Perſons, to make 'em really ſo. Yet is this a Vein of Weakneſs and Error that runs thro' the Diſcourſes of the *Antipædobaptiſts*; and many of Mr. *Gale*'s Obſervations from the Fathers, againſt Infant-Baptiſm, have no other Bottom.

But 'tis farther objected, " May we not as well " pretend a Title to the Land of *Canaan*, on the a- " foreſaid Account, as to the Privileges of the Old " *Iſrael*, and particularly to the covenanting Or- " dinance for little Children? " No, we may not; becauſe there is too much Difference in the Caſes, for us to found ſuch a fooliſh Claim or Title, as is there ſuggeſted. For one was a Temporal Bleſſing, and the other is Spiritual. The earthly *Canaan* was no Privilege of the Patriarchal Church, in which the Fathers had not a Foot of Inheritance, except only to bury their Dead. The Promiſe of it was never made to proſelyted *Gentiles*, but to the Nation of the *Jews* alone; and it was typical of another *Canaan*, into which we ſhall not enter 'till we die. That Spot of Ground could never contain all the

the Chriſtians in the World; nor are we ſuch Fools as to be fond of Types, when we have the Anti-types, and to dwell in the Clouds, when we have a clear Heaven over our Heads. Frivolous, indeed, are ſuch Objections; yet are we concern'd to take ſome Notice of 'em, that they who make 'em, may not ſeem wiſe in their own Conceit, nor therewith abuſe the Injudicious.

3. If our Warrant and Commiſſion for admitting Infants into the Evangelical Church and Covenant by the proper Ceremony, be required, we can produce one from God's own Mouth, of as old a Date as the Days of *Abraham*. For God commanded *Abraham*, and all Poſterity that were of his Faith, ſo to initiate their little Children. And his Order for it has never ſince been countermanded. He only ſubſtituted another initiating Ordinance in the former's room, but gave no Directions to exclude Infants.

4. The Command for that Purpoſe was very peremptory, and back'd with the Penalty of Exciſion, upon Contempt. The Infants themſelves could not be guilty of any culpable Omiſſion, it being no Fault of their Will, if they were not initiated after God's Law, which they could neither deſire, or refuſe. Yet, upon Neglect of fulfilling the Law, thoſe Infants ſhould be cut off from God's People, as Violators of his Covenant, *Gen.* xvii. 14. Hard Uſage this may ſeem to Men who give themſelves ſuch a Liberty of Thought, that they cannot perceive how the Condition of Infants is better or worſe for Things that are not within their Power. Circumciſed or Uncircumciſed, Baptized or Unbaptized, are equally indifferent, in their Opinion, becauſe nothing is loſt or gain'd by either, unto Infants. Only to baptize them is a flagrant Sin in Chriſt's Miniſters; but that it can any-ways better their ſpiritual State, is poſitively denied by *Anti-*

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pædobaptists on their faithful Word, which we must not question. For dare we affirm, that Baptism takes off Original Sin, when we see that Baptized Persons can be Sinners? We dare, and do it boldly, in respect of the Stain it transmits unto the Soul, and the Guilt, or Obligation, to eternal Punishment. For we firmly adhere to that famous Declaration of our Church in behalf of baptized Infants; "It is "certain, from God's Word, that Children which are "Baptized, dying before they commit actual Sin, "are undoubtedly saved. And of the same Per-"suasion was the 5th Council of *Carthage*, wherein "St. *Austin* presided; *Quicunq; negat parvulos*, &c. "Whosoever denies Infants to be deliver'd from "Perdition by Christian Baptism, and to ob-"tain eternal Salvation, let him be *Anathema*." Then must the Guilt and Pollution of Original Sin in Infants be removed by that Ordinance. Also Grace is there ensur'd to them, to break the Force and reigning Power of Sin, when they grow up, and it will prove an effectual Remedy, if in following Times it be complied with and duly cultivated. But if it be hard for others to believe, that Circumcision could, or Baptism can, amend the spiritual State of Infants; it is harder yet for us to believe, that God, in establishing the Covenant of Grace, would exercise an arbitrary Power to injoin on Infants, under a severe Sanction, a painful Rite to be kept precisely on a certain Day, which in the Accounts of Religion was good for nothing. How serviceable the Life of *Moses* was to the Church of God, is well known; yet was that Life indanger'd to be cut off short before the Services were done, for neglecting to circumcise his Son at the Time prescribed, *Exod.* iv. 24. Which, I think, should caution Christian Parents against being careless and dilatory in baptizing their Children, and entring them betimes into the Church and Covenant.

"But

" But why then do we not bind ourſelves to bap-
" tize 'em punctually on the Eighth Day after their
" Birth, as the Command ſtrictly ran for their
" Circumciſion?" I anſwer, 'Tis becauſe we do not hold an exact Parallel in all Particulars between the Two Ordinances, as Mr. *Gale* and others, who inſiſt on this Objection, ſuppoſe we do. What we urge, belongs to the ſubſtantial Parts of the Ordinances, not to the circumſtantial; and in theſe, the Ordinances of the New Teſtament do vary from the Old ones. Now Time is but a Circumſtance, which is more changeable and diſpenſable than the Sacrament it ſelf. Neither has Chriſt given ſuch punctual Preſcriptions about the Adminiſtration of Baptiſm, in reſpect of Circumſtances, as God had given about Circumciſion. For in ſuch Matters the Goſpel is a Law of Liberty, and leaves us to the Latitude of Diſcretion. And for this Liberty there is apparent Reaſon; becauſe an Univerſal Church ſpread over the whole World, cannot be tied to ſuch Niceties and Punctilio's, as a Patriarchal or National Church was. What ſuits the one, will not ſuit the Condition of the other Oeconomy. And eſpecially, in the preſent Caſe, there is this Difference: Circumciſion being limitted to a certain Day, to fulfil the Law, it was allow'd other Perſons to circumciſe, beſide the Prieſts and *Levites*, when theſe were not at hand; or beſide the Fathers, when they neglected it. Then, as P. *Tragius* ſays on *Deut.* x. 16. " A Servant, tho' uncircumciſed himſelf, and
" even a Woman, or a Youth, that was not an Eth-
" nick or Infidel, might circumciſe." And *Grotius*, on *Gen.* xvii. 12. ſays, " It might be done by
" Women and private Men, provided they were
" not ſuch as he calls *Ex-leges*. So *Zipporah* cir-
" cumciſed *Gerſhom*, *Exod.* iv. 25." For the Truth of this, becauſe I find it queſtion'd, my Authors ſtand accountable. But the Adminiſtration of Baptiſm

tism being confin'd to Men in Holy Orders, many times such Ministers could not be had, in Case it was limitted to a precise Day. And several other Inconveniencies might render the Matter extremely hard, if not impracticable. Necessity, therefore, will dispense with that Circumstance. Let it be also observ'd, that Baptism invests in Privileges that are highly valuable; whereas the prescribing of a set Day, would impose a Hardship that is now unsupportable, as Matters stand. These Privileges Infants enjoy'd long before, tho' they were not tied to the same Duties with adult Persons. And it is not reasonable they should, under the same Covenant, be thrown out of their old Privileges, for the sake of Hardships to which they themselves in Equity were never oblig'd, and which others cannot perform in their Behalf.

5. Admittance into God's Church and gracious Covenant being a high Privilege, that intitles to many Divine Favours, those Infants, who by God's solemn Act of Grace had the Right of Prescription to that Privilege from *Abraham*'s Days down to Christ, must be continued in it to the World's End, unless it plainly appears, that God has since divested them of their Right. Possession of the Seal and initiatory Ceremony they had by God's Law, and by immemorial Custom, which in a Matter of Grace or Benefit firmly pleads their Right still, and establishes their Claim. Nor can any new Demerits be alledg'd against them, as a Bar to their ancient Rights. The Law for their Investiture was clear and strong, and so ought to be the Law for their Disseisure too, in Case it had ever passed. For the Repeal of Laws, by Implication and far-fetched Consequences, is not allow'd; but the Repeal must be plain and positive, as the enacting of the Law was, that it may appear to be the Will and Intent of the Legislator. Where God was plea-

ſed to communicate his Favours, Men muſt not venture to make Incloſures or Reſtrictions; and, in Matters of that Nature, even a probable Right and Claim, that injures not another Party, ought in Equity to take place. No need was there of a new Precept to injoin the Duty, or confirm the Right, when the original Law, under the ſame Evangelical Diſpenſation, and for the ſame covenanted Privileges, remained in Force, and the Practice of the Church had run on that Side in a long uninterrupted Channel. But if, in after-Times, God was determin'd to retrench Infants of their ancient Privileges, there was Need he ſhould ſignify his Mind in Words that were neither dark nor ambiguous; ſince the Revocation of a Grant or Charter ſhould be as evident as the Deed of Gift, and not depend on ſuch ſtrain'd Deductions as are foreign to the Caſe of Infants; and, therefore, in themſelves, moſt unreaſonable. So the old Grant, Law and Cuſtom, do, to this Day, ſtand inviolable.

6. That God's Love to the Infants and little Children of believing Parents, is in the leaſt abated upon our Saviour's coming into the World, we have no Reaſon to imagine; but are very certain, it ſtill continues as it did before. Why then ſhould we think he has diſ-privileg'd them, or caſt them clean out of his Church and Covenant? As to what regards his Affection towards them, the Style of the New Teſtament runs as much in their Favour, as it did in the Old; and ſo do the Actions of our Saviour. Thus the Evangelical Promiſes in their Behalf formerly went; *I will eſtabliſh my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee, in all Generations, for an everlaſting Covenant, to be a God to thee, and to thy Seed after thee*, Gen. xvii. 7. Hereby God oblig'd himſelf for ever to be a Benefactor to *Abraham* and his Poſterity, in ſpiritual

ſings, and ſign'd it to Infants of Eight Days old, that were his natural, or ſpiritual Seed, by a viſible Seal. And why ſhould he refuſe to ſign it ſtill, under the ſame gracious Covenant, foraſmuch as the Covenant it ſelf, and his good Will therein confirmed, were to be everlaſting? So when he reeſtabliſhed the ſame Covenant with the *Jews* in *Moab*, he took in the Little Ones with their Parents, and alſo thoſe that were unborn at that Time, *Deut.* xxix. 11, 12, 15. And this was to laſt as a Law under the Chriſtian Oeconomy in our Saviour's Days. For St. *Paul* ſays, that the Word of Faith which he and the other Apoſtles preached, was contain'd in that Covenant. Likewiſe, *Iſa.* lix. 21. when the Redeemer ſhould come to *Zion*, the ſame Covenant was to continue to Chriſtians and their Seed, and to their Seed's Seed for ever. And ſeeing theſe were the old Grants and Promiſes of God to the holy Seed, and to remain ſtedfaſt thro' all Generations, in vain ſhall we look to find them aboliſh'd by Jeſus Chriſt, who came not to annul, but to fulfil the Promiſes of the Covenant. For, after the old Style, the Children of Chriſtians are ſtill holy, 1 *Cor.* vii. 14. and *Rom.* xi. 16. becauſe they are born of holy Parents, who are *Children of the Covenant, and Heirs of the Promiſes made to the Fathers*, Acts iii. 25. and *Ch.* ii. 39.

Wherefore, towards the Infants and little Children of ſuch Parents as were in Covenant Relation with God, we know what Kindneſs and tender Affection his beloved Son expreſſed. Patterns of Converſion, and Emblems of Humility, he makes them to his Diſciples, *Matt.* xviii. 3. And a little lower, *v.* 5, 6. he declares; *Whoſo ſhall receive one ſuch little Child in my Name, receiveth me. But whoſo ſhall offend any one of theſe Little Ones, which believe in me, it were better for him that a Milſtone were hanged about his Neck, and that he were drowned in*

the Depth of the Sea. Alſo, when Infants were brought to Chriſt, that he ſhould lay his Hands on them and pray, and his Diſciples rebuked thoſe that brought them, he was much diſpleaſed with their miſ-guided Zeal; but he called the Infants to him, gave a general Command, that they ſhould be ſuffer'd to come unto him, took them up in his Arms, gave them his Bleſſing, and pronounced, *That of ſuch as them was the Kingdom of God.* Theſe Paſſages ſhew, that God's Love to the Infants and Children of believing Parents, is not at all abated upon Chriſt's coming to preach the Goſpel; but that he retains the ſame gracious Inclination to them, that he had when he preached the Goſpel unto *Abraham:* And, conſequently, it cannot be ſuppoſed, that he has thrown them out of Covenant, or rejected them from Fellowſhip and Communion with his Church. His Pattern of Love ſhould be follow'd, and the former Meaſures ſhould not be chang'd; but to God and Chriſt we may boldly bring our Infants for Goſpel Grace and Bleſſing, and dedicate them to God by the proper Ordinance, ſince we know his Willingneſs to receive them. We innovate nothing herein, but obſerve the old Rule and Method. Nor do we preſume without Grounds; becauſe the Words and Actions of his own Son promiſe in their Favour all the Aſſurance we can deſire of a kind Reception.

7. They who exclude ſuch Infants from the Covenant of Grace, and the Society of the Faithful, do their Parts effectually to diſannul the Covenant to thoſe Infants. For they reſcind God's ſacred and ſolemn Act of Grace paſſed to the Off-ſpring of faithful Parents, as an everlaſting Covenant to all Generations. And if for this they have not a ſufficient Warrant from God himſelf, let them conſider how they will anſwer it at his Tribunal. Rigor and Severity, in ſuch Caſes, may be of dange-

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rous Consequence, and highly offensive to the Divine Majesty; whereas to chuse the favourable Side, in Case we really err'd, gives us a just Presumption of Pardon, because Mercy rejoiceth against Judgment. St. *Paul* speaking of the Covenant of Grace made with *Abraham*, uses Words that deserve our Adversaries serious Reflections, *Gal.* iii. 15. *Brethren, I speak after the manner of Men: Tho' it be a Man's Covenant, yet, if it be confirmed, no Man disannulleth, or addeth thereto.* If human Wills and Covenants be thus inviolable, the Will and Covenant of God is more inviolable, and must not be annull'd by Men. To the Infants of professed Believers was his Covenant made, and to endure for ever: Yet, to them is it denied by *Antipædobaptists*, who refuse to Infants the Agnition and Confirmation of the Covenant.

But against this they may suggest; "We meddle not with the Will and Covenant of God, but "grant and affirm too, that God freely remits to "Infants Original Sin, and receives them into "Heaven without the Sacrament of Baptism. "Wherefore, by allowing them the main Benefits "of the Covenant, we rather confirm, than disannul the Covenant.

In return to which, I answer, That our Adversaries are liberal in granting to Infants what is clean out of their Power to give or refuse: And, what is worse for them, they give them what they can never prove to be their Right and Due from God's Word, when in an unbaptized State they allot unto them Remission of Sin and eternal Salvation. In the mean while, they are wonderful sparing of what is in their Power to give and grant; namely, Admission into the Church and Covenant by Christian Baptism. What need we thank them for not cramping the merciful Hands of God, as they do their own; and for not absolutely shutting the

Gates of Heaven againſt Infants, as they ſhut againſt them the Doors of the Church? And, yet, virtually, and by good Conſequence, they do the former alſo.

But, to juſtify my preſent Charge; They really diſannul the Covenant to Infants, who deny them the ſealing Ordinance. Had it pleaſed God in our Days to leave the Covenant without a viſible Seal, we muſt have referr'd all to his good Pleaſure, and been content. But now, as he order'd the Matter otherwiſe from *Abraham*'s Time, ſo we muſt leave it to ſtand in the ſame Poſture and Situation that he has plac'd it: Elſe it is certain, that when by Law, or Compact, a Seal is made neceſſary to a Covenant, he that refuſes to ſeal, does, by Conſtruction of Law, refuſe the Covenant. For ſo the Male-Infant was accounted to break the Covenant, and be effectually out of it, who was not circumciſed at the Day appointed. When Parents contract for their Children, and Guardians for their Wards, tho' they bring all to a full Agreement, yet, if they refuſe to affix the Seal, or perform the neceſſary Rite of Confirmation, they diſannul the Contract, and deny their Children, or Wards, all its Benefits. In like manner, they who reject Infants from the Covenanting Ordinance, and deny them the initiating Ceremony into God's Church, do their Part to deny them the Bleſſings of the Covenant, and all the Benefits of Church-Communion. "For the breaking off of the Seal (and it is the ſame to refuſe it) "cancels the Covenant to which it was prefix'd, "as all Men know, ſays Mr. *Benj. Keach*, *Bel. Bapt. diſplay'd*, Chap. I. p. 1." And is not this effectually to diſannul the Covenant to thoſe Children, who were certainly in it once, 'till they arrive to Years of Diſcretion, and to ſet them to ſtand on the ſame Level with the Children of Infidels? How numerous thoſe Children are in the Chriſtian World,

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we leave to conjecture; a nice and exact Computation being as needleſs as it is impoſſible. Too many by far they certainly are to be wrong'd in the leaſt of their ſpiritual Intereſts.

8. Whatſoever Perſons are out of the Covenant of Grace, they are left to the Law of Nature, or to the firſt Covenant of Works, which requires a perfect and ſinleſs Obedience, in order to Juſtification; by virtue whereof, in our lapſed State, Salvation does therefore become impoſſible. For there being but Two Covenants in all, that propoſe Life to Mankind, he that is not within the one, muſt needs remain under the other. Wherefore, if the Infants of Chriſtian Parents be not within the Covenant of Grace, they are ſtill under the Covenant of Works; and if they be not grafted anew into the Second *Adam*, who ſaves all that will be ſaved, they abide in the Stock of the Firſt *Adam*, who deſtroyed them all by Sin, and, as it were, tainted their Blood by Treaſon and Rebellion againſt God's Majeſty. Shall we then, while they remain in that State and Covenant, hope for their Salvation, which is only to be had on God's Terms, and not on our own? If we do, we hope without a Promiſe, and preſume of Grace and Salvation in their behalf, when God is not oblig'd by Covenant to beſtow them. Nay, we hope againſt the expreſs Declarations of his Word; wherein he affirms, That by the Law and Covenant of Works, *no Fleſh alive ſhall be juſtified.* And what a deplorable Foundation is this, to ground the Happineſs of our Children upon?

But if within the Covenant of Grace they be, as undoubtedly they are, if they be in a State of Salvation, then let them not be denied God's Seal to confirm and inſure his gracious Promiſes. Let them not be kept out of his Church, like an unclean and prophane Seed, that ſtill lie under the Covenant of Works, and the Guilt of the firſt Tranſgreſſion,

and therefore are obnoxious to everlaſting Death. Thro' Chriſt only they can be ſaved; and if His they be by Act of Redemption, give and conſecrate them to him by the Sacrament of Baptiſm, who will never refuſe his own, nor reject the Purchaſe of his Blood. For they that are within the Covenant, have, by God's original Order and Charter-Grant, a rightful Claim to its proper Seal. If to the Inheritance of Eternal Life, they have a Right by their Saviour's Death, deny them not the external Evidence and Security. And if Citizens of that glorious Corporation, the *Holy Zion* and *New Jeruſalem*, they are by Grace, let them enjoy the Privileges that belong to Citizens, and are ſuitable to their Capacities; for they cannot be with-held without Injuſtice.

He that has a preſent Right to an Eſtate, has the ſame Right to the Writings and Conveyances. Indeed, if the Inheritance is not in Poſſeſſion, but Reverſion, or if the Heir is by Law or Nature uncapable of Poſſeſſion, the Securities may remain in other Mens Cuſtody. But, if Infants deſcending from profeſs'd Believers are really and actually in a ſaveable State, they have as much the Right of preſent Poſſeſſion, as adult Perſons; and are in as good a Capacity of receiving the Deeds and Securities, as they were in the Patriarchs Days.

Little to be regarded are our Antagoniſts, when they dictate dogmatically and magiſterially, upon their Word, "That if thoſe Infants be within the "Covenant of Grace, they ſhall be certainly ſaved "without Baptiſm, which ſignifies nothing to bet-"ter their Condition." This is to cheat us out of our Chriſtian Privileges and Securities; and might as well be ſaid of Circumciſion, as it is of Baptiſm. But we have not ſo learned Chriſt, as to contemn his Sacraments, and neglect our external Evidences for Salvation. A Man may be born with

with a Title to an Eſtate, to Freedom, or other Privileges; and yet be oblig'd to ſolemn Inveſtiture or Admittance by the appointed Ceremonies, before he can be ſettled in the actual Enjoyment and Poſſeſſion of his Rights.

9. Of the unbelieving *Jews* the Apoſtle ſays, *Rom.* xi. 28, 29. *As concerning the Goſpel, they are Enemies for your ſake: but as touching the Election, they are beloved for the Fathers ſakes. For the Gifts and Calling of God are without Repentance.* This he ſpeaks of Men that had treated the Son of God and his Holy Goſpel with the higheſt Indignities. Still God had ſome Kindneſs in Reſerve for them, for their Fathers ſakes: Nor could he finally repent of his gracious Acts in their Behalf; but intended, on thoſe Accounts, ſome Time after, to re-induce them by Converſion into his Church, *v.* 26. If ſuch Reaſons as theſe can be pleaded in Favour of ſtubborn Infidels, with greater Strength may they be alledg'd for Infants. For they are equally upon their Side, ſuppoſing the Caſes of both were equal. But in this Infants have a manifeſt Advantage, becauſe they are guilty of no freſh or perſonal Offences againſt God, as thoſe *Jews* were. And without Provocations given, the unchangeable God never alters his gracious Meaſures towards his People, ſo as to expreſs Severity where he uſed to ſhew Kindneſs. If therefore, for their Fathers ſakes, and for the Sake of his own Gifts and Calling, he intended to re-induce thoſe undeſerving *Jews* into the Church; much more, for the ſame Reaſons, would he retain Infants within the Church, that never offended him, ſince by Grace he firſt brought them in. In a ſpiritual Account, the Fathers were theirs, and the Gifts and Calling of God were theirs; and we believe they are without Repentance.

Thus

Thus far, I conceive, the Scales are even, and the Parallel runs equally on to maintain our Argument. For the State and Condition of Infants is the ſame now, as it was in *Abraham*'s and the Patriarchs Days; as the Church and Covenant are the ſame in Subſtance. Conſequently, we are perſuaded, they have the ſame Right to Baptiſm, that ſuch Infants then had to Circumciſion. And if it could be proved, that God hath not commanded them to be baptiz'd; yet can it never be proved, that he hath commanded them to be diſ-privileg'd; I mean, to be caſt or left out of the Church and Covenant.

If, therefore, any Alteration be made in God's Will and Conduct towards Infants, relating to the Point in Agitation, it could be owing to no other Cauſe, but the dignified Nature of Baptiſm, and the Deference due unto it upon that Account above Circumciſion. And ſuppoſing this were true, yet whether it be a ſufficient Ground for ſuch a diſadvantageous Change to all the Infants of the Chriſtian World, we dare appeal to impartial Judgment. For to Infants, Baptiſm may be adminiſtred with no leſs Conveniency than Circumciſion: Of its bleſſed Privileges they may equally partake. To its Duties and Conditions they may as well be bound. And in the Obſervance of them they may be educated juſt as they were in ancient Times.

But that there is any material Difference in reſpect of Dignity between Baptiſm and Circumciſion, I cannot readily yield, when the Nature, Ends and Uſes of both are well examined and adjuſted. The Act of waſhing the Body with Water is not in itſelf more noble, tho' leſs painful, than the Rite of Circumciſion. If Baptiſm initiates into the Church of God, and ſigns the Covenant of Grace, ſo did Circumciſion. If Baptiſm dedicates to the Worſhip of God, ſo did Circumciſion. If Baptiſm adopts to be his Sons, ſo did Circumciſion. *For*

Iſrael

Israel *is my Son, even my First-born*, said God, *Exod.* iv. 22. when *Israel* knew no other Covenant but that which was seal'd by Circumcision. If Baptism consigns to Faith in Christ as come, Circumcision did the same to Christ as future. If Baptism be the Laver of Regeneration, representing our Death and Burial with Christ to Sin, and our Resurrection with him also to Newness of Life; and if it stipulates for Grace to perform the same, so, in Effect, did Circumcision. For it signified and obliged to the inward Circumcision of the Heart and Spirit, and so to a Holy Life, which is equivalent to those Christian Duties: And God promised Grace for that Purpose to circumcised Persons, as has been proved before. The Expressions differ, but the Sense agrees. Wherefore, seeing Baptism and Circumcision have much the same Dignity and Uses in the same Evangelical Church and Covenant, I know no Reason resulting from the Nature of Things, why Baptism may not as well be administred to Infants, as Circumcision was; nor why the doing of it should be counted a Prostitution, or Profanation of one Ordinance more than of the other.

Here it will be proper to obviate the main Objections raised by our Adversaries against our Doctrine, that are hitherto unanswered.

I. We are sure to be told, "That Females were "not circumcised under the Old Testament." We freely grant it. But to what Purpose is this alledged? or, How does it make against the Lawfulness of Infant-Baptism? If it be produc'd only to shew, that neither Circumcision, nor Baptism, is absolutely necessary to Salvation, which is the most it can prove; we acknowledge, that Positive Ordinances are necessary for no Persons at all, beside those for whom they are instituted and designed. But if this

this Allegation proves any thing, it proves, that Baptiſm is no more neceſſary for adult Perſons, than for Infants; becauſe Females were not circumciſed in their riper Years, any more than in their Infancy and Minority. Alſo our Adverſaries ought to know, that many Things in Religion may be lawful and rightful, which, nevertheleſs, are not of indiſpenſible Neceſſity. But if from thence they would infer, That Infant-Baptiſm is not lawful; this Inference hangs by Geometry, there being no manner of Connexion between the Premiſe and the Concluſion. For how does it follow, Women of old were not circumciſed; therefore, Infants now muſt not be baptized? It was not the Unlawfulneſs of the Act that debarred Females from Circumciſion, but their natural Incapacity for the Operation: Which Incapacity cannot be pleaded againſt the baptizing either of them, or Infants. Therefore, the Bar and only Reaſon that hindred, being removed, the Practice may follow.

But, if they will affirm, That it was unlawful to circumciſe Females, as I know ſome of them roundly do, I deſire to know, by what Rule, or Divine Law, that was in Force at the Inſtitution, and ſome Centuries after, as the preſent Meaſure and Standard of Practice to the Church, they will have this Queſtion decided, or undertake to juſtify that pretended Unlawfulneſs? For we will not be determined by any ſubſequent Laws, that were peculiar to another Diſpenſation. But if they ſay, it was always againſt the Moral and Natural Law, that Men ſhould uſe any poſitive Acts or Ordinances in Religion, which God had not commanded; then I require them to ſhew me a Divine Command for *Abel*'s and *Noah*'s Sacrifices; for *Abraham*'s giving Tythes to *Melchiſedec*, as God's Prieſt; for *Jacob*'s erecting an Altar to God at *Salem*, *Gen.* xxxiii. 20. and for his Vow at *Bethel*, to ſet up a

Stone

Stone for a Pillar to be God's Houſe, and conſecrating it with Oil, and a Drink-offering; and alſo, giving the Tenth of all his Stock to God, *Gen.* xxviii. 20, *&c.* and xxxv. 14. About the Pillar, indeed, an after Command he had to perform, but not to vow. Againſt the Moral Law they could not act in theſe Matters, becauſe God accepted of their Acts. But if it be ſuggeſted, That a Command they had, tho' it be not recorded in holy Writ; I retort upon them their own beloved Maxim out of *Tertullian: Negat Scriptura, quod non notat; The Scripture denies what it does not affirm.* And let them make the moſt of it they can to their own Advantage.

II. It is caſt in our Teeth at every turn, "That "from the Practice of God's Church in giving the "Paſſover to Infants, it may as well be inferred, "That Infants ſhould communicate in the Lord's "Supper, as we infer Infant-Baptiſm from the Cir-"cumciſion of Infants. Alſo, in ſome of the pri-"mitive Times, the Lord's Supper was adminiſtred "to Infants, with the Approbation of the Fathers "of the Church." But,

1. I am uncertain, whether Infants in the *Jewiſh* Church did eat the Paſſover. I am ſure that Place of *Exod.* xii. 26, 27. which is quoted for it, does not prove it. For of Age thoſe Children were to ask and to underſtand Queſtions about its Nature and Uſes; nor is it there ſaid, that they did eat the Paſſover, but only examined what it meant. And tho', *v.* 3, 4. the Preparation for that Feaſt in the Paſchal Lamb, was to be according to the Houſe-hold, or the Number of Souls contained in the Family; yet, that might be underſtood only of ſuch Souls as were qualified to eat thereof.

2. If

2. If Infants did eat of the Paſſover, the Inference will not hold, that they ought now to eat the Lord's Supper, as it holds from their Circumciſion to their Baptiſm. For the Paſſover was not a Patriarchal Inſtitution, nor Part of the Evangelical Covenant made with *Abraham*; but a *Moſaical* Ordinance, inſtituted about Two Months before the giving of the Law on Mount *Sinai*, to commemorate a particular Bleſſing or two vouchſaf'd by God to the *Jews* alone. And it is not from *Moſes*, but from the Fathers, we derive our Evangelical Privileges.

3. I am of the Opinion, that the Paſſover did not typify the Lord's Supper, but his Paſſion: *For Chriſt our Paſſover is ſacrificed for us*, 1 Cor. v. 7. Therefore, as the Correſpondenee does not hold between the Two Ordinances, ſo neither will the Argument hold from the one to the other. Eſpecially, conſidering that the Paſſover was not a Patriarchal, but a *Moſaical* Inſtitution. I know that ſome of my very Learned Brethren of the Clergy are of another Mind, and believe, that the Paſſover typified the Lord's Supper. But 'till I ſee it proved, I have no cauſe to alter my own Opinion, which, I think, is grounded on better Reaſons. However, I can paſs this by; for I lay not much Streſs upon it.

4. Baptiſm being an Admiſſion into the Church of Chriſt, and in God's Hands the Inſtrument of our New Birth, ſigning Remiſſion of Original Sin, and ingaging for Sanctifying Grace, according to the Meaſures of Time, and the Proportion of the preſent Faculties; ſerves for all the Ends of Grace, that Infants and Children ſtand in need, or are capable of in their Minority. But when grown up to the Exerciſe of Reaſon, they have need of ſtronger Nouriſhment, and new Supports againſt the Aſſaults of their ghoſtly Enemies, and the Decays of Grace occa-

occasioned by actual Sins; which is accordingly administred in the Lord's Supper, as it is also by Prayer, Exhortation, Reproof, and other Assistances. Likewise, in that Supper, they renew their Baptismal Covenant; and, after preceding Lapses, bring themselves under fresh Engagements to perform its Conditions, thro' the Grace that is there expected and afforded. None of which is necessary, and part of it not proper or convenient, before they commit actual Sin, and impair their Baptismal Graces by the Follies of their riper Years. Wherefore,

5. If the ancient Church, with the Fathers Approbation, gave the Eucharist to Infants, they only did what was vain and needless; not what was unlawful. A pure Mistake, a harmless Error in Practice, it might be, but no Guilt, or unpardonable Transgression. For as Infants had no need of that Sacrament, and as they could not understand its Nature and Obligations, Uses and Benefits, so they could not prostitute or profane it by Misbehaviour. And therefore, if to them it was unprofitable, yet it was not hurtful.

St. *Cyprian*, in his Tract *De Lapsis*, informs us of this remarkable Passage. "A young Girl, without her Will and Knowledge, because not of Age "to understand and give Consent, was profaned "by an Idol Sacrifice. Afterwards being offered "the Communion of our Lord's Body and Blood, "she refused it by Divine Instinct. And when it "was forced by the Deacon into her Mouth, she "cast it out again with strange Vomitings and "Strainings: So great was the Power and Majesty "of God." So that holy Bishop and Martyr, of which he says he was an ocular Witness. From whence we gather, that the Communicating of Infants was not ordinarily such a wicked and sacrilegious Act as some imagine. Why else did not God

testify

teſtify his Diſpleaſure and Abhorrence of it, in ſuch a viſible Manner, as in this Inſtance, when it was profaned, tho' without the Child's Fault; but ſuffer'd the Church to proceed in a criminal Practice? His patient Toleration of it in other Caſes, ſhews, that he counted it no great Offence, if any at all.

Was our Adverſaries Deduction therefore good, that upon the ſame Ground we baptize Infants, we ſhould alſo give them the other Sacrament? What would they gain hereby, but only oblige us to give them both: And, for my own Part, I ſhould be much ſooner induc'd to communicate them, than to leave them unbaptized. For in that I ſhould only do what was unprofitable and ſuperfluous; in this I ſhould do what I am perſuaded is highly injurious to helpleſs Infants. And if in Conſcience I believed, tho' upon wrong Principles, as the Fathers did, that I was bound to give them the Lord's Supper, I truſt the Error would be pardonable. The Qualifications of Self-Examination, diſcerning the Lord's Body, *&c.* I ſhould apply only to adult Perſons, as we do the Conditions in Baptiſm, and as the *Jews* did in Circumciſion.

III. Great Account is commonly made of *John*'s rejecting the Phariſees and Sadduces Claim to Baptiſm; *We have* Abraham *to our Father*, Matt. iii. 9. Hence they conclude, the *Abrahamical* Covenant not to be the Evangelical, becauſe that gave *Abraham*'s Seed a Birth-right to the Seal, which is denied to hold good under the Goſpel Diſpenſation. A Deſcent and Birth from believing Parents, is not therefore a ſufficient Title to Baptiſm; but they that claim it, muſt be otherwiſe qualified. And another Uſe is made of *John*'s Baptiſm, that concerns the Manner of Adminiſtration.

Whether *John* did finally refuſe to baptize thoſe Phariſees and Sadduces, or not, is to me indifferent;

But

But I deny the Baptism of *John* and *Christ*, to be essentially the same. And then no Argument can be rais'd from the one unto the other. For if they differ'd in their Nature and Essence, they might differ in the Mode of Administration and other Circumstances. The Proof lies on them who hold the Affirmative; but I will gratifie them this one time in proving a Negative, to prevent all Cavils, and let them see, that I deny not without Reason. The Matter, or outward Element, which was Water, was the same in both Baptisms. But this will not prove an Identity in the Ordinances, or an essential Agreement. For not the Matter, but the Forms, internal or external, give a specific Difference or Agreement unto things. Then I say, that the Baptisms of *John* and *Christ* differ'd in both the Forms, and also in their Uses, Ends and Designs.

1. They differed in their internal Forms, provided *John*'s had any such Form at all. For the internal Form of Christ's Baptism, consists in the Operation of the Spirit upon the Soul, to wash off its Pollution by regenerating Grace, and to seal the Remission of Sins. But we do not read, that *John* in his Baptism, promis'd those Effects, only he bound the Persons baptiz'd to Confession and Repentance; whereupon their Pardon and Sanctification follow'd. So that these Effects were not annex'd to his Baptism; but to his Doctrine, and to their Repentance. For *John* baptiz'd with Water, but Christ with the Holy Ghost.

2. They differed in their external Forms: What Form of Words *John* used in his Baptism, is not recorded, tho' we may suppose he used some. But we are sure he used not the same that Christ has commanded us to do in his; which runs in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Of the Holy Ghost *John* made no mention in his Baptism. Otherwise the Disciples baptiz'd by him, could not have answered and said of themselves; *We have not so much*

as heard, whether there be any Holy Ghoſt, Acts xix. 2. Neither did he baptize in the Name of Jeſus: Elſe St. *Paul* would not have order'd thoſe Diſciples to be baptiz'd again in that Name, *v.* 5. Whereas *John* only charg'd in his Doctrine, that they ſhould believe on him that ſhould come after him, that is, on Chriſt Jeſus, *v.* 4. If *John*'s Baptiſm and *Chriſt*'s had been ſpecifically the ſame, here was an Apoſtolical Warrant given for Re-Baptization, or re-iterating the ſame Baptiſm, to the ſame Perſons, which is never allow'd. For nothing can be plainer, than that thoſe Diſciples were re-baptiz'd, whom *John* had baptiz'd before. 'Tis ſaid of *Apollos*, that he knew only the Baptiſm of *John*, *Acts* xviii. 25. Which clearly intimates, that beſide that, there was a Baptiſm of another Species.

3. The Uſe, End and Deſign of Chriſt's Baptiſm, was to make Diſciples to himſelf of all Nations, Sexes, and Ages too, as we believe, and thereby to admit them into his Church in general: As the *Jews* us'd to do their Proſelytes by Circumciſion of the Males, and by Baptiſm and Sacrifice to all. But the Deſign of *John*'s Baptiſm, was to make a particular Sect of Diſciples to himſelf, out of the Church and Nation of the *Jews* alone. Theſe, after his Example, were to lead a Life that conſiſted in Abſtinence, Rigor and Severity, that they might be the better prepar'd and diſciplin'd to entertain the *Meſſias*. Members of God's Church *John*'s Diſciples were before by Circumciſion: Adult Perſons they might only be, becauſe they alone were fitteſt for his purpoſe; and perhaps none but Males. For tho' he might preach openly unto all, yet we do not read of any Females, Infants and little Children, among his ſelect Diſciples. But herein I will not be poſitive.

At that Time the Covenanting and Incorporating Ordinance by God's Law, was not Baptiſm, but Circumciſion. So the *Phariſees* and *Sadducees* had been

been circumcised before into the *Abrahamical* Covenant in their Infancy, and were acknowledged for Members of the true Church of God. And as flagitiously wicked as they were, their Infant Children had still a Right to the same Privileges, because born of Parents that were profess'd Believers, and visibly within the Church and Covenant. *John* therefore denied none of those Rights, nor could he do it with Truth and Justice. But the Fathers being of Age, and great Sinners, and yet desiring to be admitted into the Profession of a strict Holiness, it was necessary for *John* to abate their vain Confidences, and oblige them to true Repentance, before they could receive the Benefits they expected.

It was not therefore Admission into the Church and Covenant, (wherein they had been long before by the proper Ordinance) that they desir'd, and *John* denied. But he denied their Title to true Holiness and Salvation, barely on the Account of their being *Abraham*'s Children, and the like external Privileges. So did the Prophets, and so did Christ to the circumcised, but sinful *Jews*. So did the Apostles, and so do we to all Baptized Christians that are of Age, and live in Sin. May we not rebuke their Vices, and remonstrate the Folly and Vanity of their idle Confidences, without being suppos'd to Unchurch or Un-covenant them, and absolutely deny their Claim to the external Privileges of Church Communion, into which they were Baptiz'd? When, God in *Isa.* 1. and elsewhere, heavily tax'd the *Jews* with their wicked Lives and Hypocritical Devotions, whereof he express'd his utmost Abhorrence, declaring their Services to be not only fruitless, but detestable, and their Privileges vain; did he thereby quite Un-church them, and place them visibly in the State of Heathens? No; but unworthy Citizens will enjoy their external Rights both Civil and Ecclesiastical, till they come under Judicial Sentences, and are formally depriv'd or suspended by Authority.

4. As we teach, there is an Engagement, Vow and Sacred Oath, brought on Infants in their Baptiſm: And this without their Conſent or Knowledge, and as others ſay, without Inſurance of Grace to perform the Engagement; which does therefore neceſſarily involve them in the Guilt of Perfidiouſneſs, Perjury, and ſuch horrid Crimes. This is hotly declaimed againſt as a Snare to Souls, and as a voluntary Vow condemned, *Mat.* v. 34. upon which come the Tragical Out-cries; "O perjur'd Nation! perjur'd "People! and perjur'd Paſtors! For ſo are all de- "bauched, drunken, ſwearing and unclean Teachers. "Are not theſe perjur'd alſo? Have they kept their "Vow and Covenant? *&c.*" *Keach, Bel. Bapt. diſplay'd, p.* 270. which we had before alſo in his *Rector Rectified.* Nor can honeſt *Daniel Williams*, though a diſſenting Brother, eſcape the Laſh, for his lamentable Doctrine about that Oath. But to the great Comfort of baptized Infants, the Vow is pronounced void, and they are clean abſolv'd from all Obligations, by a Sentence no leſs decretory and definitive, than if it were Prætorian or Pontifical. So their charitable Advocate, but our Severe Judge, Mr. *Benjamin Keach.*

But voluntary Vows and Oblations were approv'd of under the Law: There alſo good Kings brought themſelves and People under the Engagement of ſuch Vows to ſerve God, and obey his Commandments; as *David* ſwore *he would keep his righteous Judgments*, Pſal. cxix. 106. and *Nehemiah* made them enter into a Curſe and an Oath for the ſame End, *Neh.* x. 29.

I am of Opinion, that Chriſt has not prohibited all voluntary Vows and Oaths, in the fore-cited place of St. *Matthew.* For I think ſuch a Prohibition would infringe the Natural Right and Obligations we have to devote ourſelves to God's Service. Surely, I find in myſelf a natural inherent Power, and think it

it also my Duty, to dispose of my self to God's Worship with a willing Mind. Promise and resolve I may to perform my Religious Duties; and what I can safely promise, I can vow and swear, when I think it requisite; tho' this is a stricter Bond, and the Breach thereof more criminal. Nothing do we in such Vows, but ingage ourselves strongly to what is already our indispensible Duty upon Pain of Damnation. And why may not Infants and little Children be brought under the same Engagements, which bind them to no more than what they are absolutely bound to all their Days by the Laws of God? No Sins of theirs will be counted perfidious Violations of their Vow, but those that are wilful, and therefore imputable to themselves as their free Choice. In Civil Affairs, Parents act for their young Children, and Trustees for their Pupils. And when those Acts are apparently for the Minor's Profit, the Law will justify them, and oblige to Performance, as is well known, and daily practised. The same will hold in Matters of Religion, which infinitely make for the Childrens Advantage. Here is no Snare laid, but Salvation projected for their Souls: Or, if insnar'd they be, it is afterwards thro' the treacherous Consent and free Election of their own Will.

But after all, what if God himself brought them under the same Vow and Covenant so long ago as the Days of *Abraham*, and by his Command oblig'd them to stand to it thro' all Generations? And what if he advanced this Covenant into an Oath, *Deut.* xxix. 12. wherein the Fathers must consent and stipulate for their Little Ones, and the Living for those that were not yet in Being? *v.* 15. This I assert to be the very Truth. Then all the profane Thunder and Lightning that is flash'd out against our Practice, flies in the Face of God, whose Precedent we follow, and whose Precept we obey. Nor

is it ſo hard a Caſe, to bring unconſenting Infants under the eaſy Yoke of Chriſt's gracious Covenant, as it was to bring them under the unſupportable Yoke of Bondage to *Moſes* his Law, as our Adverſaries ſay Circumciſion did. I will ſay nothing of Grace to perform the Covenant, which is always ſure on God's ſide.

5. In order to deſtroy our Birth-Right to the Seal of the Covenant, upon the old *Abrahamical* Foundation, we are told near a hundred times over; *That no Man is now to be known after the Fleſh; but old Things are paſſed away, and all Things are become new*, 2 *Cor.* v. 16, 17. All I ſhall reply to this, is, That the Covenant of Grace made with *Abraham*, and the Right which the Infants of believing Parents have in it, will never paſs away. Thoſe Words of the Apoſtle are, therefore, groſly underſtood, or miſ-applied; but, in their true Senſe, are nothing at all to our Adverſaries Purpoſe.

To what is already ſaid upon this Argument, I ſhall add Two Obſervations more, which have been often urged by *Pædobaptiſts*.

1. When we conſider how difficult the *Jews* were to part with their ancient Privileges and Cuſtoms, we can hardly believe, that upon their Converſion to Chriſtianity, they would eaſily part with the old Covenant Privileges for their Children. Every body knows how ſtiffly they ſtood for Circumciſion, and how zealous they were for the Rites of the Law. Now, if by turning Chriſtians, they had ſeen all their Infants quite diſ-privileged, excluded from the Church and Covenant, and treated as the Children of Heathens in thoſe reſpects, who, in their Accounts, were no better than unclean Dogs; we cannot believe they would ever have taken it ſo patiently, as not once to open their Mouths on that Occaſion. Probably the Difficulty of making them Chriſtians, or retaining them in the Church on ſuch a Term,

had

had greatly increaſed. In former Times, from *Abraham* to *Chriſt*, the Children and Infants were proſelyted with their Parents, and admitted Members of the Church. The Gain of the one, was the others Gain. But now, by becoming Chriſtians, their Infants and little Children, who were in the Church of God before, are turned out. And ſo the Parents Gain was their Loſs. Strange! that this ſhould be the Effect of God's Grace, and Chriſt's meritorious Paſſion, to un-church the young Children of ſo many Thouſand converted *Jews!* And no leſs ſtrange, that thoſe *Jews* ſhould forget their uſual Stiffneſs, Murmurs and Tumults, and bear it quietly! This makes the Account appear highly improbable, if not incredible. I could not forbear to mention it curſorily, tho' others have inſiſted on it more at large.

2. It was a Cuſtom among the *Jews*, in our Saviour's Time, and before, to baptize the Converts to their Religion, and with the Parents to baptize their Infants. This Cuſtom Chriſt is ſuppoſed to have tranſcribed into his Church, and that the Apoſtles obſerved it in making Diſciples. For they baptized ſeveral whole Families; among whom, it is moſt probable, there were ſome Infants, or young Children.

The Truth and Matter of Fact relating to that *Jewiſh* Baptiſm, has been of late denied and oppoſed. I think Sir *Norton Knatchbul* was the firſt that broke the Ice, and ventured upon this Denial. But what he has ſaid to diſprove it, is very weak and inconſiderable; and his firſt Argument concludes ſtrongly againſt himſelf. Others have followed him, and eſpecially Mr. *Gale* ſpends Two long Letters upon the Subject. So confident is he of Succeſs, "That "he is inclin'd to venture the Matter upon this "Iſſue, and almoſt make a Promiſe to unite with "the Eſtabliſh'd Church, if it can be proved, that

" the *Jews* baptized the Infants of their Proſelytes " before and at the Time of Chriſt's ſending out his " Diſciples." For to this Effect are his Words, *Let.* VI. *p.* 222.

As I have not laid Infant-Baptiſm on this Baſe or Foundation, ſo I am not oblig'd to follow our Author Step by Step in a full Anſwer to what he has advanced on this Article. With the *Rabbinical* Writings I am not much acquainted, nor need I ever deſire to be, if his Judgment and Cenſures of them be juſt. However, his Arguments that ſeem to me to have any Strength, I ſhall briefly examine, and return what I think ſufficient to overthrow them, and confirm the Truth of the *Jews* Baptiſm.

1. He owns, " 'Tis conſiderable, that ſo many " Learned Men favour the Opinion; but it will ap- " pear from the Reaſons they give for it, that they " were too credulous, and entertained it too eaſily; " which leſſens their Authority very much, *Let.* " IX. *p.* 325." They did not only favour it, but they affirmed it for a certain Truth, and inſiſted upon it. And it is to be ſuppoſed, that when ſo very many of the moſt Learned Writers in *Europe* have confidently aſſerted and publiſhed it before the World, they had well weighed and conſidered the Matter. Nor were any Men more converſant than ſeveral of them, with the Works of the *Rabbies*. " Yet were they not only too credulous, but, by " Mr. *Gale*'s Account, guilty of the greateſt Folly " and Madneſs in the World, to believe, as they " did, this, or any thing elſe, upon the ſole Au- " thority of the *Rabbies*, p. 334." Fine Compliments from a polite and Scholar-like Pen, to no leſs Men than *Hammond*, *Taylor*, *Whithy*, *Selden*, *Puffendorf*, the admirable *Grotius*, the incomparable *Lightfoot*, as he calls them, and many other Authors of the moſt eminent Note, who have given into that Perſuaſion upon the ſole Authority of the *Rabbies!*

If

If Mr. *Gale*'s Judgment be right, ſuch Places as *Bedlam* had been fitteſt to entertain thoſe diſtracted Heads; and their Books ſhould rather ſee the Flames, than be kept in Studies and Libraries for Peruſal.

2. He tells us, "That Mr. *Wall*'s Authorities "do not prove the *Jews* Baptiſm to be practiſed in "Chriſt's Time, much leſs before it, *p.* 325." Do they not, indeed? Will Mr. *Gale* ſtand by this? Yes, he does, and affirms it over and over, *p.* 328. Again, *p.* 333. And again, *p.* 334. Let us, therefore, be now tried by Mr. *Wall*'s Authorities, and hear what they ſay, to ſee if Mr. *Gale* can poſſibly be juſtified or excuſed.

In Mr. *Wall*'s Quotation, "*Maimonides* ſays of "the *Jews* Baptiſm, It was ſo in all Ages; and "cites Scripture for it as old as *Moſes*, *Numb.* xv. "15. *As you are, ſo ſhall the Stranger, or Proſelyte, "be.* How are you? (ſpeaking to the native *Jews*) "By Circumciſion, and Baptiſm, and Sacrifice. "So likewiſe the Stranger, thro' all Generations, "by Circumciſion, and Baptiſm, and bringing of a "Sacrifice." The *Talmud*, *Tit. Repud.* ſays, "*Je-"thro*, *Moſes*'s Father-in-Law, was made a Proſe-"lyte by Circumciſion, and Immerſion in Waters." Was not that before Chriſt's Time? Alſo, they ground the Practice of that Baptiſm upon *Exod.* xix. 10. as Mr. *Gale* knows: but how rightly, is not my Buſineſs to inquire. And ſo, in their Opinion, it muſt be very ancient, ſince they thought the Law was for it. Whereupon *Maimonides* affirms, "Bap-"tiſm was in the Wilderneſs juſt before the giving "of the Law." Again, ſays the *Talmud*, *Tit. Cherithoth*, *c.* 2. "It was the way whereby the Fathers "were incovenanted." Meaning the Fathers of the old Times. All which made the incomparable *Lightfoot* uſe theſe Expreſſions of the Times, at and before Chriſt; "*Pædobaptiſm* in the *Jewiſh* Church, "in

" in the Admiſſion of Proſelytes, was ſo known, " uſual and frequent, that nothing was more known, " uſual and frequent, *Hor. Heb.* on *Matt.* iii. 6." Than whom, and the great *Buxtorf*, we have Mr. *Gale*'s Word, " That none ever better under- " ſtood, nor were more univerſally acquainted " with the *Rabbins* and their Writings, *p.* 350." Here then is one Inſtance of Mr. *Gale*'s Candor and Ingenuity, in repreſenting his Adverſaries Quota- tions and Authorities, on whom he ſo often ſmartly reflects for the like Management. And, I think, this, and ſeveral other Inſtances of the ſame Nature, ſhould very much leſſen his own Credit and Autho- rity. But,

3. The *Rabbins* were too late to bear authentic Teſtimony to the Baptiſm of their Church, which is ſaid to be in Uſe in and before Chriſt's Time. " For the *Miſchna*, the ancienteſt Part of the *Tal-* " *mud*, was compil'd 150 Years after the Deſtru- " ction of *Jeruſalem*; another Part of it 230 Years, " and a third 500 Years after Chriſt, *p.* 326. Al- " ſo, *Maimonides* and R. *Solomon* lived in the 12th " Century." But, certainly, very poor Antiqua- ries muſt thoſe *Talmudiſts* be, if they knew not what was the common Cuſtom of their Church in an ini- tiatory Ordinance, or whether there was any ſuch thing in Uſe, but 2 or 300 Years before their Days. As now thoſe Men would be mean Hiſtorians, who among us ſhould ſet up for Eccleſiaſtical Writers; and yet did not know, whether or no Infant-Bap- tiſm was practiſed in our Church at the Reforma- tion and before.

" But *Maimonides* in particular, tho' a great " Man, has his Evidence excepted againſt, as a late " incompetent Witneſs, who could know no more " than we do, what was the Uſage of his Church in " our Saviour's Days; and, therefore, muſt not be " credited on his bare Word, without producing

" much

" much older Authority. " And might not he have ſuch Authority, tho' he thought not himſelf oblig'd to produce it, becauſe the Caſe was unconteſtable? But here Mr. *Gale* himſelf is kind to help us out, by acknowledging, That *Maimonides* had the Authority of the *Talmud* and Wiſe Men of old, for his Tradition of the Proſelyte Baptiſm in Diſpute, *Let.* X. *p.* 390. And, I truſt, an older Evidence than the *Talmud* will be produced for it very ſoon.

4. Mr. *Gale*, I think, endeavours rather to inſinuate than perſuade, that the *Jewiſh* Baptiſm was not initiatory, but purgative; or a bare cleanſing with Water from the Blood of Circumciſion, which was thought polluting; and the *Miſchna* may mean no more, *Let.* IX. *p.* 328. Right! if the waſhing away that Blood was initiatory, and made Proſelytes. For the Baptiſm the *Talmud* ſpeaks of, did ſo; as that *Jethro* was made a Proſelyte by Circumciſion and Immerſion in Waters; and that it was the way whereby the Fathers were incovenanted. And in Mr. *Wall*'s firſt Citation, The Proſelyte, when circumciſed, was baptized in the Preſence of Two Wiſe Men, *&c.* And was their Preſence required at the Purification from the Blood of Circumciſion? Let Mr. *Gale* prove that. But to the making of Proſelytes it was. Nor can he underſtand, how a Perſon could be waſh'd with Two different Waſhings at one and the ſame Time. Therefore, there was but one waſhing of the Blood uſed. A knotty Problem, indeed, for a Wiſe Man to be ſtartled at! For if he could not be twice waſh'd in the ſame Inſtant of Time, might he not be ſo waſh'd in the ſame Hour, or in the ſame Day? Mr. *Gale* has with much ado proved, That the *Jews* had another Baptiſm or Waſhing at their Circumciſion: Therefore, that muſt be the Initiatory Baptiſm mentioned by the *Talmud* and *Rabbins*; or, therefore,

fore, they had no ſuch Initiatory Baptiſm for Proſelytes. Here is the Conſequence; for he has proved nothing elſe. 'Tis like our Author may think it impoſſible for him to trifle, that being the Monopoly of the *Pædobaptiſts*: Otherwiſe, here might be ſomething like it.

4. But in *p.* 329, *&c.* he ſays of that Baptiſm; "The Antiquity of the Practice is rendred dubious "by the Diſagreement of the *Rabbins*. Some plain- "ly aſſert it, and others as plainly intimate, they "neither knew nor allow'd of ſuch an Initiatory "Ceremony." The Ignoramus Jury, and negative Voices, are, for Brevity's ſake, reduced to Two; and the only One of them that ſpeaks ſomething to the Purpoſe, is moſt grievouſly ſtigmatiz'd by Mr. *Gale* himſelf; which, I ſuppoſe, is not to raiſe the Credit of his Teſtimony. "For an anonymous "Author he is that wrote the ancienteſt *Nizza-* "*chon*, who, with his uſual Gall, would expoſe "Baptiſm as abſurd and fooliſh." But what is it that he would expoſe? Not the *Jews*, but the Chriſtians Baptiſm. Againſt the former he ſpeaks not a Word, that I can ſee: But Mr. *Gale* forces it from him by ſuch Deductions as the Author might not think of. But had he ſpoken ever ſo full and plain to the Point, the Character Mr. *Gale* gives him, had ſpoil'd all, and utterly ruin'd his Reputation. For, ſince that Author wrote with his uſual Gall, trifled, blaſphemed, and was an idle, cavilling, quarrelſome *Jew*; Why might he not be an impudent Liar too? And ſince he wrote with ſuch a bitter invenom'd Spirit againſt Chriſtianity, Why might he not reſolve to ſtab our Church, tho' it were thro' the Sides or Bowels of his own? And why might he not maliciouſly conceal or deny the *Jews* Baptiſm, that he might have better Room to ſpit his Poyſon at thoſe of *John* and *Chriſt*?

Some-

Somewhat oddly it may look in an Author, to give so much Credit to one spiteful and infamous Writer among the *Rabbies*, as to take his single Testimony against all the rest of them. Will he upon his Authority believe the *Jewish* Baptism to be a Sham, or at least of no Antiquity? When that virulent *Jew* liv'd and wrote, I know not: But his Words, if they signify any thing in Mr. *Gale*'s Favour, speak as strongly against the controverted Baptism in his own Time, as in our Saviour's. And so if late he liv'd, it seems there was none at all, notwithstanding older Testimonies of better Men. What does Mr. *Gale* mean, by producing such Evidence against us, unless it be to banter us out of that Right we claim to common Sense, and treat us indeed as Fools and Idiots? Will he himself deny, that there either is or was such a Baptism among the *Jews* in later Ages? I dare engage he will not. Yet if that nameless Author speaks Truth, and is on his side, there was no such Baptism in his Days, any more than in the Days of our Blessed Lord. Must he be credited against all the Tribe, when he is owned to be a shameless Writer? Be the *Rabbies* as bad as Mr. *Gale* represents them, yet it is to be hop'd *Maimonides*, that great Man, and some few more that bear witness to the *Jews* initiatory Baptism, were more honest and reputable Writers than the scandalous *Nizzichon*. But if the Intent of this is to shew, that none of all the *Rabbies* deserves Credit, because one contradicts the rest; at this Rate no Authors in the World can maintain their Reputation, except those that were divinely inspir'd.

The other Negative Evidence is *R. Isaac*, who expresses himself against the Christians in these Words: "They have abrogated Circumcision, and substituted "Baptism in its stead; as they have likewise done the "Sabbath, instead of which they observe the first Day "of the Week." This, says Mr. *Gale*, is exceeding plain;

" plain; for as they kept a new Day inſtead of the " ancient one, ſo he ſays, they have in the like " manner ſubſtituted a new Ceremony of Initiation " inſtead of the old one." Not ſo exceeding plain neither; for *R. Iſaac* ſays nothing of a new Ceremony, but it is Mr. *Gale*'s own Gloſs and Comment. It might be old therefore for all this, and the Chriſtian Baptiſm have ſucceeded to it, as well as to Circumciſion, which alone the Chriſtians, in the *Rabby*'s Expreſſions, had aboliſh'd. But the *Jews* Baptiſm, he neither affirms nor denies, and his bare Silence is no Argument for or againſt it. When two Rites are jointly us'd for the ſame End, he that abrogates one, and appoints the other to ſerve for both, may be truly and properly ſaid to ſubſtitute one inſtead of two. As he that imploys two Servants in one Buſineſs, if afterwards he thinks one ſufficient, and diſcharging the other, lays all the Burden on one alone, may be ſaid to ſubſtitute him, in his room, and in his own too, without any Impropriety of Speech at all. For now he has double Duty upon his Hands, which was not ſo before.

Mr. *Gale* goes on arguing; " *R. Iſaac* complains, " The Chriſtians have aboliſh'd the whole Law, and " all the Divine Precepts which the Law makes neceſ- " ſary, except only ſome things in relation to Inceſt, " *&c.* Here he enumerates ſome of the Moral Pre- " cepts, but does not mention Baptiſm at all." From whence Mr. *Gale* concludes, that in *R. Iſaac*'s Judgment, Baptiſm was no Inſtitution of *Moſes*, nor practis'd by the *Jews* before Chriſt, becauſe he does not except it among the Rites, which the Chriſtians had not aboliſhed. Very acutely and judiciouſly obſerved! *R. Iſaac* enumerates the Moral Precepts of the Law, which the Chriſtians had not aboliſh'd, and what a Fool was he, that he did not place Baptiſm among thoſe Moral Precepts? Or, what great Neceſſity was there, he ſhould take it for a Divine

Inſtitution

Institution by *Moses*, and not a meer Tradition of the Elders? But if the legal Washings and Ablutions, with several others invented by the *Jews*, were called Baptisms, as the Gospel teaches, and Mr. *Gale* acknowledges, how in his Opinion should *R. Isaac* aver, there was no Baptism at all in use among his Countrymen before Christ? For his Words conclude against all, if against one. This is a Question for Mr. *Gale* to resolve.

But suppose these two *Rabbies* were in Mr. *Gale*'s Interest, will their Evidence alone, render the *Jews* initiatory Baptism dubious? Then I believe it will be hard to prove the Canon of the New Testament, and justify all the Parts of it, we now receive to be genuine and authentic; seeing the Proof of it lies chiefly, if not wholly, upon the Testimony of the Church and ancient Writers. For Mr. *Gale* may know how long it was, before that Canon was perfectly settled and completed: And he may know what great Authors among Christians, as well Ancient as Modern, have question'd, if not denied, the Authority of some Pieces in the Canon. If therefore, his present Argument will do Service against Infant Baptism, let him take care it does no Service for Deists and Infidels, against the Holy Scripture.

5. That we have no Evidence for the *Jews* initiatory Baptism, to be in use as early as Christ's Time, is our Adversaries Position; and if we can prove it, they dare almost venture to promise Conformity with the Establish'd Church: What I shall now observe may call upon them, to mind that Promise, had they made it without Reserve. For we have unquestionable Authority for that, which is much earlier than the *Mischna*, and comes up full to the Apostolical Age; nay, and will assert the Practice for a long time before.

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The Diſputes of Rabbi *Eliezer* and Rabbi *Joſhua* about it, are as good a Proof of the Uſage of it, in their Time, and before that, as our preſent Diſputes about Infant Baptiſm, are a Proof that ſuch a Baptiſm is now in uſe, and has been ſo a conſiderable time among ſome Chriſtians, provided that *Pædobaptiſts* will be allowed the Name. *R. Eliezer* did no more deny the Uſe and Lawfulneſs of Baptiſm, in initiating Proſelytes, as ſome pretend he did, than *R. Joſhua* did that Uſe of Circumciſion: Only the firſt would not grant it to be the ſole or chief Ceremony, that made the Proſelyte, but aſcrib'd that Effect to Circumciſion, which the other denied, and gave to Baptiſm. This was the Conteſt then manag'd between the two *Rabbies*; namely, about the Virtue, Efficacy, Dignity and Precedence of the two Rites, as will appear preſently from their Words; not about their Being and Lawfulneſs, which both ſuppoſed and allow'd. And ſo did the Wiſemen, that decided the Controverſy againſt them both, and gave their Sentence equally in Favour of the two Ordinances. For, ſurely, they would not have given it for Baptiſm, nor levell'd it with Circumciſion, if Baptiſm was not then in common Practice, or they thought it a very late and novel Invention.

Let us therefore, firſt ſettle the Time when thoſe two *Rabbies* liv'd, and then recite the Words of their Diſpute, with the Determination of the Judges. Sir *N. Knatchbul*, makes them Co-temporaries with *Joſephus* the famous Hiſtorian of the *Jews*. The Learned Author, who wrote the Book call'd, *The Judgment of the* Jewiſh *Church againſt the* Unitarians, whom I ſuppoſe to have been Dr. *Allix*, ſays from the *Megillah*, c. 1. that *Onkelos* compoſed his *Targum* under the Conduct of *R. Eliezer* and *Joſhua*, after the Year of our Lord 70. about which Time *Joſephus* flouriſh'd, *Ch.* vii. *p.* 86. And the ſame *Epoche*, does Mr. *Stennett* ſomewhere give them, in his Anſwer

swer to Mr. *Russen*. So I hope the Time wherein they lived will stand uncontroverted. Here then are Two Witnesses, besides the Class of Judges, for the *Jews* initiatory Baptism, living in the Apostolical Age, about Forty or Fifty Years after *John* and *Christ* had instituted their several Baptisms. And, probably, they must be born at that Time, or thereabout, since it required in them a considerable Age to become chief Disputants and Masters in *Israel*, and Guides to *Onkelos* in composing the *Targum*.

The Words of these Two *Rabbies* concerning the Proselyting Ordinance, and the Definitive Sentence of the Wise Men, Mr. *Wall* gives us in his *Introduction*, p. 27. out of the *Gemara*, *Tit. Jeoamoth*, c. 4. "Of him that was circumcised, and not baptized, "*R. Eliezer* said, that he was a Proselyte. Be"cause, said he, we find of our Fathers (*Abraham*, "*Isaac*, &c.) that they were circumcised, but not "baptized. And of him that was baptized, and "not circumcised, *R. Joshua* said, that he was a "Proselyte; because, said he, we find of our Mo"thers, that they were baptized, and not circum"cised. But the Wise Men pronounced, That 'till "he were both baptized and circumcised, he was "not a Proselyte." This then is a plain Testimony of the Two *Rabbies*, and Decision of the Wise Men, for the Practice of Initiatory Baptism among the *Jews* long before our Saviour's Time. Abandoned of Shame must our Antagonists be, when they produce it as an Evidence against the Practice. And Mr. *Gale* himself cannot forbear to slur it slightly over, by saying, "That both those *Rabbies* do "controvert the Baptism of Proselytes, *Let.* X. "p. 389." Which is very false; for both owned the Baptism, tho' one disputed its Preference to Circumcision in making the Proselyte.

Could R. *Joſhua* be underſtood to mean what he ſays of their own immediate Mothers; thoſe Two Women muſt have been baptized before *John* and *Chriſt* had begun their Baptiſms. But as it is like they were not Proſelytes, and therefore, perhaps, not baptized at all, the *Jews*, as is ſaid, uſing not to baptize Natives; ſo that cannot be R. *Joſhua*'s Meaning. For who knows not, that the common Uſe of the Word *Fathers* in Scripture, and the *Rabbies*, imports their ancient Predeceſſors ſo long before, as to run up their Original to *Moſes* and the Patriarchs? And ſo in *Rabbi Eliezer*'s Words, *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, &c. are meant, or expreſly mentioned. And to them *Mothers* are oppoſed, in the ſame Senſe and Latitude, by his Antagoniſt. For we cannot think but R. *Joſhua* would ſtrive to vie with his Adverſary, in ſome Degree at leaſt, for the Antiquity of his Ordinance.

If this will not ſuffice, how eaſy and obvious had it been for R. *Eliezer*, who contended for Circumciſion againſt Baptiſm, to run down his Opponent into Silence and Confuſion, in caſe Baptiſm had been a novel Inſtitution? Since you ſay, "That "Baptiſm makes the Proſelyte, how can that be "poſſibly true, when we all know it to be an up- "ſtart Rite of Yeſterday's ſtanding in the Church, "and never uſed for this Purpoſe, 'till Two Men, "*John* and *Jeſus*, about Forty or Fifty Years ago, "within the Memory of many now living, abo- "liſh'd Circumciſion, as the Proſelyting Ceremony, "and ſubſtituted Baptiſm in its ſtead, among their "Diſciples? No Knowledge had we of it before in "that Senſe, no Uſe 'till now of late. Will you "then affirm, That all the Converts in former "Times, as the *Idumeans* in *Hyrcanus*'s Days, "*Ahaſuerus*'s Subjects in *Mordecai*'s, thoſe in the "Reigns of *David* and *Solomon*, to name no more, "were not Proſelytes, becauſe they were only cir- "cumciſed,

" cumciſed, and not baptized? If That you dare " not, you cannot do, what Folly and Weakneſs " is it, to maintain Baptiſm to be the chief, or " only Proſelyting Rite; when t'other Day, if not " to this very Juncture, there was no ſuch a thing " with us in Being?" Had this been ſo, of all the Fools that ever managed a publick Diſpute, *R. Eliezer* had been the greateſt, if with this Argument he had not baffled his Adverſary, and ſtruck the Wiſe Men dumb, who determined againſt him for Baptiſm, as well as Circumciſion.

Hereupon I ſhould be inclined to flatter myſelf with a good Hiſtorical Evidence for the Antiquity of a Proſelyting Baptiſm, as a Rite of conſiderable ſtanding among the *Jews* before the Time of *Chriſt*, and ſhould think it unanſwerable; but that I ſuſpect ſome brisk critical Head may ſtart up, and pertly ask me; " Pray, Sir, what Authority have " you to believe ſuch a Diſpute, as you mention, " was ever held by thoſe two *Rabbies*, and that " the Wiſe Men gave their deciſive Voices in it; " nay, that there have been ſuch Perſons in the " World? Have you the Account recorded in Holy " Writ, or the Chriſtian Fathers? Or, do you find " it in the polite and creditable Annals of the " *Greeks* or *Latins?* No, Sir, no; but you have " it only from the deſpicable, ignorant and whim- " ſical Writers of the *Jews*, whom it is the great- " eſt Folly and Madneſs in the World to believe in " any thing upon their ſole Authority. I there- " fore regard it no more than I do the Chat of " the Beaſts and Birds in *Æſop*'s *Fables.*" Should any one thus reply upon me to invalidate my Evidence, what could I do but croſs the Cudgels and be quiet? Or, at moſt, refer my Cauſe to equitable Judgment, whether this muſt paſs for a fair Refutation? Yet, perhaps, ſome Perſons might like it well enough, when it ſhould come in their Turn to

make Repriſals. For an expedite Method it is, to ſave Diſputes about muſty Authors, and give a quick and nimble Diſpatch to ſeveral Controverſies. For,

6. This is Mr. *Gale*'s Method to diſpacth the *Jewiſh Rabbies*, and render their Teſtimony of no moment at all for that controverted Baptiſm. Strange Whimſies, Abſurdities, Blaſphemies, he lays at their Doors, and proves upon them! Be thoſe true, and abundance more their due in general, yet need they not be all of the ſame Stamp, nor equally Triflers and Forgers of Lies. When *Epimenides* characterized his Country-men, "The *Cretians* are "always Liars;" out of the Number he muſt except himſelf, if in that Character he would be credited. It is ſtrange, that the *Rabbies* ſhould all agree in a known Lie, and deliver it down unanimouſly thro' ſo many Ages to Poſterity, while there was not one honeſt Man found that would contradict them.

And yet, Suppoſe they were ſo wicked, as to deliver for Truth what they knew to be falſe, how was it poſſible at firſt to eſcape Diſcovery? The Vulgar's Ignorance and Credulity they might eaſily abuſe with ridiculous, profane and impious Narratives about God, their old *Rabbies*, and other abſtruſe Matters, that were far remote from the Peoples Cognizance, and whereof they were, therefore, incompetent Judges. But the baptizing of Proſelytes, was a plain Matter of Fact, done in Publick before Witneſſes, and continued, as they ſaid, throughout all Ages. But if it was never practiſed before, nor at the Time when it was firſt delivered for an old Tradition, every Body of common Senſe muſt know the Falſhood.

Beſide, it is an approved Rule, *Nemo malus gratis:* And then let it be ſhew'd, what Temptation thoſe *Rabbies* had ariſing from Profit, Pleaſure, Repu-

Reputation, Ambition, or the like corrupt Intereſt, to agree in forming a Fiction of their own Brain, that was hardly paſſable, if at all, concerning the Initiatory Baptiſm now in Queſtion. In Stories of another Nature they might propoſe to themſelves to be admired, aggrandized, and blindly followed by the ſilly People, for Men of Wiſdom in Myſteries, or Ability in Wonders. But, in relation to that Baptiſm, I can ſee no manner of Motive that could induce them to Prevarication.

7. Mr. *Gale*, towards the Cloſe of his 9th *Letter*, gives the finiſhing Stroke in parting for the Time with this Subject. His Words are theſe; "I will "add but one Inſtance more, which reaches ex- "preſly the Thing in diſpute, and proves their "(the *Jews*) Traditions, concerning Waſhings, "made void the Law; *Mark* vii. 8, 9. *Laying aſide "the Commandment of God, ye hold the Traditions "of Men, as the waſhing of Pots and Cups; and "many other ſuch like Things ye do. And he ſaid "unto them, Full well ye reject the Commandment of "God, that ye may keep your own Traditions.* —— "*making the Word of God of none effect through your "Traditions, which ye have delivered.* And our "Lord concludes his Cenſure with theſe Words, "*They are blind Leaders of the Blind*, Matt. xv. 14. "All which, if there be any thing ſacred and aw- "ful, and that deſerves our moſt ſerious Regard, "in our Saviour's Words, muſt at leaſt ſignify, that "they are a dangerous Sort of Men, and rather to be "ſhunned than followed. For he expreſly com- "manded us to *beware of their Leaven.*" A little after, Mr. *Gale* ends, ſaying, "What is built up- "on this Baſis, is a *Rabbinical* Tradition, and one "of thoſe Waſhings which our Lord condemns; "but not a Chriſtian Baptiſm." So he had told us before, "That by thoſe Waſhings the *Jews* had "vacated the Law, *Lett.* IV. *p.* 154.

The Deſign of all this, is, to ſhew, That Chriſt was ſo far from approving, imitating, or confirming the *Jews* Initiatory Baptiſm, that he has utterly condemned it under the general Name of *Waſhings*, as a human Tradition that evacuated God's Commandment. But, for this Doctrine, I have a pretty large Reckoning with our Author. For,

1. Mr. *Gale* ſtrongly denies there was any ſuch Initiatory Baptiſm in Uſe and Being among the *Jews* in our Saviour's Time. How then could Chriſt condemn it among the other Waſhings, when it had no Place at all in that Liſt, and no Being among the *Jews?* Or did it tranſgreſs and vacate the Commandment of God in *Chriſt*'s Time, before it was inſtituted by the later *Rabbies?* I never knew 'till now, that Non-Entities could have ſuch wicked Effects, nor deſerve ſuch heavy Cenſures. For Chriſt plainly taxes the *Jews* for what they did in his own Time, and not for what they would do in Times following. But,

2. If the Baptiſm we ſpeak of was in Uſe among the *Jews* in *Chriſt*'s Time, how came he to condemn it as a Tradition that vacated God's Commandment, and withal to retain it in his own Church for the Initiation of Diſciples? No Uſe had it with them, but to admit Proſelytes, that I can find; and this Uſe it has in Chriſt's Church. If by that Uſe it tranſgreſſed God's Law, muſt it not do ſo ſtill? And is this conſiſtent with our Saviour's Honour?

3. How comes Mr. *Gale* to find *Traditions* in that Paſſage of Scripture, when Chriſt had put in but one? Both in the *Greek* and *Engliſh* of St. *Matthew*'s and *Mark*'s Goſpels, Chriſt has only *Tradition* in the Singular Number; which our Author has changed into *Traditions* in the Plural. Is it fair in him to take this Liberty with our Saviour's Words, to miſ-repreſent his Meaning, to multiply his

his Accounts, and bring Plurals into his Text instead of Singulars, in spite of his Expressions and Design? This is a piece of Art which conceals a secret Mystery that shall be detected presently.

4. Did Christ say, That the *Jews* Tradition about Washings, was the thing that made void the Law? Not a Syllable, nor any thing that implies it. Only he says, That the *Jews* laid aside the Commandment of God, while they held their own Tradition. The plain *English* of which must be, That they neglected God's Law, but observed their own Tradition; or they were more regardful of their own Tradition than of his Commandment: which all Men must own to be a great Fault. But,

5. What is really the Tradition of the *Jews*, which Christ says vacated the Commandment of God? You cannot see a Tittle of it in Mr. *Gale*'s Quotation; but, instead of that, a Chasm drawn over with a Stroke of his Pen. And under it is the Mystery conceal'd I have intimated before. But looking into the Evangelist St. *Mark*, I have learnt how to disclose and unfold it. For there I clearly see, what Tradition of the *Jews* it was that did cassate God's Commandment. 'Twas not that of Washing, but of *Corban*, which differs from it *toto cœlo*. Let any Body read the 9th Verse down to the 14th, and he will find it just as I say.

Now if Christ did really mean, that the *Jews* Washings did vacate God's Law, Why did he not instance them, or one sort of them, to prove it, seeing they were most proper, being then directly in Agitation? Why was he content to charge them after another manner, but go clean off from the Subject in hand, to an Instance wholly foreign to that Subject, that he might shew how they transgressed God's Law, and made it void by their Tradition? This was only in the Matter of *Corban*,

as is plain in St. *Mark*; but ſtill, if that could well be, more unexceptionable in St. *Matt.* xv. 3, *&c.* becauſe he ſpeaks only of the *Corban*, but nothing at all of the *Jews* Waſhings.

By this time we may perceive what the Stroke of Mr. *Gale*'s Pen, in the foreſaid Gap, ſignifies. Was it not to impoſe a groſs Fallacy upon us, by hiding ſomething from our Knowledge, which was not proper for his Deſign; but, if known, would utterly defeat and overthrow it? And was it not to make us believe a quite different thing from what our Bleſſed Saviour taught? Was there nothing ſacred and awful, and that deſerves our moſt ſerious Regard, in our Saviour's Words, but they muſt be thus mangled and ſadly miſ-repreſented to ſerve a Turn? Is this the Man of Conſcience, that ſchools Mr. *Wall* without Mercy, when he thinks him guilty of the like Practice but with human Authors; (ſee an Inſtance, *Let.* I. *p.* 17. about St. *Cyprian*) and yet takes himſelf a much worſe Liberty with the Word of God? If this be his way of Dealing, he is no more to be truſted than the *Rabbies*. Verily, was I guilty of ſuch Management, I ſhould fear the World would juſtly take me to be more throughly Jeſuited than Chriſtianized. But, I forbear. The thing is worſe than Words can ſet it forth, nor is it well capable of Aggravation. Mr. *Gale* may dawb it with all his Colours, and try to waſh it with his utmoſt Art, he will never come off with clean Hands.

It would be Labour ill beſtow'd, to trace him on the ſame Topic thro' his 10th *Letter*, where he tries to take off ſome of Mr. *Wall*'s Authorities for the *Jews* Initiatory Baptiſm, produces ſome negative Evidences againſt it, and touches upon other Arguments, ſuch as he could invent, to diſprove it; all which, as he ſays himſelf, amount to a Probability on his ſide, *p.* 391. And ſo let them confront

front and destroy better Evidence, if they can; for I will not lose my Time in such an idle Chace; and I know but one thing in it all that deserves a little Animadversion.

For, apprehensive he is of an ill Consequence that will attend our Plea from that Baptism, should it be admitted: "Because it will give our Baptism "to *Quakers*, *Socinians* and *Libertines*; and then, "by proving too much, it will prove nothing at "all, *p.* 381. For the *Jews* baptized only Prose- "lytes, and their Children, at their first coming "over to the Church; but no Native *Jews*, nor "the later Posterity of those Proselytes. Whence "it follows, that if we keep up to our own Pattern, "the Children of Christian Parents must not be "baptized.

We may safely pass it, that so was the Practice of the *Jews*; and for all that, be under no Apprehensions of his Consequence. For the *Jews* had another initiating Ordinance in Circumcision, which served their Turn for the Admission of their Children into the Church and Covenant from *Abraham*'s Days, and under that Precedent we skreen ourselves in baptizing all our Infants. If our Adversaries will disclaim that Precedent and Warrant, as they openly do, let them look to their own Consequence. For we are safe enough, so long as that stands good in our Behalf.

But to run them a little further into Danger: Their avowed Principle is, To do nothing in Religion of a positive Nature, except they have a Warrant for it from Scripture, Precept or Example. Where have they either of the Two for baptizing the Children of Christian Parents, since they reject our Argument from Circumcision? And where for administring the *Lord's Supper* unto Females? We have called upon them often enough for Proofs; but, hitherto, all in vain. Does not, therefore, their

own

own Principle clearly betray them into *Quakeriſm*? If, then, they cannot produce the Proofs demanded, they ſhould quit their Principle, or their Practice, leſt the one flies in the other's Face, and impleads them guilty of Self-Contradictions.

And here I diſmiſs the *Jews* Initiatory Baptiſm, with this Declaration; That when I conſider Mr. *Gale*'s Management on That and other Articles; with how much more of Artifice, than Honeſty, he ſhuffles and cuts with all Authors, and all Arguments, I am a little dubious, whether he might not as ſoon induce me to turn *Pyrrhoniſt* as *Anti-pædobaptiſt*.

THE

THE LAWFULNESS OF Infant-BAPTISM, Proved from *SCRIPTURE.*

PART II.

WHEN I first undertook this Dissertation, I intended to do little more than insist on the Argument for *Infant-Baptism*, which we raise from the *Abrahamical* Covenant. For I was not well satisfied with the Management of some *Pædobaptists* that had handled that Matter. In not distinguishing, as they ought, between the Patriarchal and *Mosaical* Covenant, they argued from the latter, to ground our Doctrine and Practice in baptizing Infants; which was but to betray the Argument to our Adversaries. I therefore thought it needful to put that Affair in a clearer Light, and give it what Advantage I was able. Then I design'd in a manner to desist, and add but little from the *New Testament*.

But

But now I find a Neceſſity of altering my Purpoſe, not only becauſe Mr. *Gale* and his Party triumph in the Objections they raiſe againſt us from the Goſpel, which they would perſuade the World are unanſwerable; but alſo leſt ſuch a wrong Conſtruction ſhould be put on my Procedure, as Mr. *Wall*'s received. His Acknowledgment that the Proofs for Infant-Baptiſm are not ſo clear and inconteſtable in God's Word, but that they may be diſputed, and that it was expedient to ſupport them with the Authority of the Primitive Church, emboldened his Antagoniſt to repreſent him ſo, as if he granted, that Infant-Baptiſm could not at all be juſtified by the Scripture. This Mr. *Gale* declares in abundance of Places: As in *Let.* VI. *p.* 221, 223, 226, 227, 231, 233. and *Let.* VII. *p.* 258; and again, *Let.* XI. *p.* 395. What he meant by this frequent Repetition of a Falſhood is plain to every Body. He was afraid the Reader ſhould forget, that by declining Scripture-Evidence, we give up our Cauſe before all that adhere to this Rule. This is no leſs ſpitefully than artfully done, and is another pregnant Inſtance of his unfair Dealing. For no ſuch thing can be truly deduced from Mr. *Wall*'s Words or Undertaking.

Mr. *Gale* has peremptorily determined, "That all "our Objections and Pretences about Circumciſion, "are manifeſtly invalid for Infant-Baptiſm; and "is perſuaded, that if the Clergy themſelves would "conſider the Matter more deliberately, they would "be aſhamed of all they have urged from this "Head, *Let.* XII. *p.* 454." I have conſidered the Matter with all the Deliberation I am Maſter of, as appears by my Endeavours on that Head. But what Shame I ſhall merit thereby, I am not yet appriz'd. He has no better Opinion of our Proof from Original Sin; which I ſhall now conſider of, and

and deliberately too, before I give it up for desperate. For,

I. With this Argument I shall begin, and lay it at the Foundation of the Gospel Evidences for Infant-Baptism, since it was the unhappy Occasion of the Gospel Oeconomy. For it is my Judgment, that we had never needed a Saviour, Redeemer, or Revelation, but for the miserable Effects of that Sin. And to frame my Argument on this Ground and Plan, I shall accept of the *Baptists* Concessions concerning the Truth and Nature of Original Sin. Nor need we thank them for those Concessions; for if they had not freely made them, we could very well have commanded and forced them from them.

In their 9th Article of the Christian Faith, they teach Word by Word as our Church doth in the same Article: "Original Sin standeth not in the "following of *Adam* (as the *Pelagians* do vainly "talk) but is the Fault and Corruption of the Na- "ture of every Man, that naturally is ingendred "of the Off-spring of *Adam*, whereby Man is very "far gone from Original Righteousness, and is, of "his own Nature, inclin'd to Evil: So that the "Flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit; and, "therefore, in every Person born into this World, "it deserveth God's Wrath and Damnation." And so they proceed in our own Language exactly to the End of the Article.

Their *Confession of Faith*, subscribed by near Forty of their Ministers, in the Name of above an Hundred Baptiz'd Congregations in *England* and *Wales*, 1689. is full to the same Purpose; *Chap. 6. Sect.* 2, &c. "Our first Parents, by this Sin, fell "from their Original Righteousness and Communion "with God, and we in them, whereby Death came "upon all; all becoming dead in Sin, and wholly defiled in all the Faculties and Parts of Soul

"and

" and Body: They being the Root, and, by God's " Appointment, ſtanding in the Room and Stead of " all Mankind, the Guilt of the Sin was imputed, " and corrupted Nature conveyed to all their Po- " ſterity, deſcending from them by ordinary Ge- " neration, being now conceived in Sin, and, by " Nature, Children of Wrath, the Servants of Sin, " the Subjects of Death, and all other Miſeries, Spi- " ritual, Temporal and Eternal, unleſs the Lord " Jeſus ſet them free." There is more behind in that *Confeſſion*; but this is ſufficient for our Purpoſe.

Alſo their *Catechiſm* ſet forth upon this *Confeſſion*, in Anſwer to *Queſt.* 22. preſents us with this Doctrine: " All Mankind, by their Fall, loſt Com- " munion with God, are under his Wrath and " Curſe, and ſo made liable to all the Miſeries of " this Life, to Death it ſelf, and to the Pains of " Hell for ever." To which I ſhall add Mr. *Gale*'s Words: " The modern *Antipædobaptiſts* do own the " Doctrine of Original Sin, as well as the others, " *Let.* XI. *p.* 405." Likewiſe, *Let.* XIII. *p.* 535. " It no more follows from that Principle (of Ori- " ginal Sin) that the ancient Church practiſed In- " fant-Baptiſm, than that all the *Antipædobaptiſts* " do ſo now; for they likewiſe hold the common " Notion of Original Sin." When he expreſſes himſelf in theſe univerſal Terms, *All the Antipædobaptiſts*, one would think there could be no Exception, but that he himſelf, and every Body elſe of that Denomination, was included; tho' I have ſome Reaſon to ſuſpect the contrary in his own Caſe.

Original Sin, with its ſad Effects, being thus fully granted, I need not prove it; but go on to raiſe my Argument from it for Infant-Baptiſm.

In

In Original Sin there are Two Branches, which Infants are concerned in equally with Adult Persons. One is natural Corruption and Pravity, which ſtains and pollutes the Soul. The other is Guilt, which renders them obnoxious unto Puniſhment. Neither of thoſe can be taken off in our lapſed Condition, without the Application of redeeming Grace, which is as neceſſary for Infants as the Adult.

For, the Corruption of Nature, or the Contagion of Original Sin defiling the Soul, is an inherent Evil; which, according to Scripture, does utterly unqualify us for the Kingdom of Heaven. And ſo it muſt likewiſe do according to the *Baptiſts* Doctrine, which teaches, "That all *Adam*'s Poſterity, "by ordinary Generation, are the Servants of Sin, "the Subjects of Death, and all other Miſeries, "Spiritual, Temporal and Eternal, unleſs the "Lord Jeſus ſet them free." Of ſuch we truly hold with the Word of God, That *Corruption doth not inherit Incorruption*; That *without Holineſs no one ſhall ſee the Lord*; That *none that is defiled or unclean, ſhall enter into the heavenly City*; And, that *no one, except he be born again of Water and of the Spirit, can enter into the Kingdom of God*; becauſe *that which is born of the Fleſh is Fleſh*. It is corrupt, ſinful, mortal Fleſh, like its Principle from which it deſcends: "Liable therefore to the Sen-"tence of Death paſt upon all Sinners: Foraſmuch "as every Sin deſerveth God's Wrath and Curſe, "both in this Life, and in that which is to come," ſays the *Baptiſts Catechiſm*, *Anſw.* to *Queſt.* 89.

If thus the Caſe ſtands, all Perſons naturally deſcended from the Firſt *Adam*, muſt be ſanctified and regenerated, before they can be admitted into God's Kingdom. Infants cannot be excepted, becauſe they are polluted with the Contagion of Sin; and, as our Adverſaries profeſs, "They are fallen off from "Com-

" Communion with God, are defiled in all the Fa-
" culties and Parts of Soul and Body, are Children
" of Wrath, do deſerve Damnation, and are ob-
" noxious to the Pains of Hell for ever." Actual Sin they have not; but without That they have enough, and too much, for their great Unhappineſs.

Let Mr. *Gale* therefore conſider, by what Authority he exempts Infants from this Neceſſity of Regeneration, and liberally votes them all into Heaven without that Method or Expedient, *Let.* XI. *p.* 421. Tho' they may not, in the higheſt Degree, have the ſame Neceſſity for a New Birth with actual Sinners; yet, they have that which appears to be abſolute and indiſpenſible. For ſick they are to Death with Sin, like other Perſons, and the ſame Diſeaſe muſt have the ſame Cure: And liable they are to the ſame Miſeries, which accordingly muſt have the ſame Remedy; when this Cure or Remedy is but one, as our Saviour ſays, there is no other. And, I believe, it is not a little dextrous Management will bring a Man off well for contradicting Chriſt; and this with very ſlight and ſuperficial Arguments.

How then are Infants born again? Or how are they purified from the Filth of Original Sin, and freed from its Servitude, in order to recover the Favour of God, and to be received into Heaven? We aſſert, it is by the Baptiſm of Water and of the Spirit joined together, as the ordinary Means, at leaſt, for that End. But all Chriſtians that are not tinctur'd with *Pelagianiſm*, muſt acknowledge, That it is by the Spirit of Sanctification acting on the Soul to cleanſe off its native Impurity, and render it pure and holy in the Sight of God. For is there any other Principle or Source of ſanctifying Grace? Any other Fountain of Purification for Sin and Uncleanneſs to the polluted Off-ſpring of *Adam?*

None,

None, certainly, beſide the Spirit of God, who commonly works the Effect by the inſtituted Ordinances and Moral Duties of Religion. Moral Duties Infants cannot practiſe; but to them the inſtituted Ordinance of Baptiſm may be eaſily applied. This therefore let them have, ſince they can have no more, and it will be their proper Cure.

That Infants may be, and are Regenerated by the Holy Ghoſt, is no Abſurdity, nor can it be a Difficulty with the *Baptiſts*. For it is plain enough their own Doctrine, "Elect Infants dying in Infancy, "are regenerated and ſaved by Chriſt through the "Spirit; who worketh when, and where, and how "he pleaſeth, *Confeſſion of Faith, Chap.* x. §. 3." And for Proofs hereof they direct us to *John* iii. 3, 5, 6, 8. Nor, as they ſay, "are any of the Elect "juſtified perſonally, until the Holy Spirit doth in "due Time actually apply Chriſt unto them, *Chap.* "xi. §. 4." Then if all Infants are in a preſent State of Salvation, as ſome of our Adverſaries ſeem to affirm; it follows from hence, that they muſt be actually ſanctified and regenerated.

But if this Baptiſm of the Spirit they grant to Infants before they can be juſtified and ſaved, they ought not to deny them the Baptiſm of Water. For then they will be preſs'd with St. *Peter*'s Queſtion; *Can any Man forbid Water that theſe ſhould not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghoſt as well as we?* Acts x. 47. If ſaved Infants are, the Holy Ghoſt they muſt receive in his regenerating and ſanctifying Grace; and if him they have received, with Water they muſt be baptiz'd. But if they have neither the Baptiſm of Water, nor of the Spirit, what Account can be given for their Salvation?

I confeſs, the Perſons referred to by St. *Peter* there, had received an extraordinary Meaſure of the Holy Ghoſt, as their ſpeaking with ſtrange Tongues teſtified. But this is alledg'd only as an Evidence of

God's Gift and their Receipt; not as the Reaſon and Ground of their Right to Baptiſm with the outward Element. Their having the Holy Ghoſt, alone, founded this Right and Title to the Sacrament; whereas the higher Degree is made no more a Qualification for it, than a lower. And if any thing could do it, the eminent and miraculous Meaſure of the Grace, would go furtheſt to ſupercede the Neceſſity of the Ceremony. But this would not ſuffice; and therefore, this is an irrefragable Argument againſt the *Quakers*.

Mr. *Gale*, by a Skilful Improvement of the Doctrine of all Judicious and Critical Divines; ſuch as *Scaliger*, *Grotius*, *Le Clerc*, Dr. *Hammond*, &c. has formed to himſelf ſuch a preciſe Notion of being Born of the Spirit, as is utterly incompatible with the State of Infants: *Let.* xi. *p.* 422. "For they "that are born of the Spirit, muſt mind the Things "of the Spirit, and obey his Motions by Faith and "Piety. This Infants cannot do, and therefore "they cannot be ſo born." But what thoſe Divines and Critics ſay, they meant only of Adult Perſons, which Mr. *Gale*, with his uſual Ingenuity, applies to Infants. So he deals with the Scriptures, Fathers, and other Writers, to diſprove their Baptiſm. After this rate, we may prove Infants not to be rational Creatures, becauſe they have not the Exerciſe of their rational Faculties, as other Perſons of that Species have; and that there were no circumciſed Infants in the *Jewiſh* Church, becauſe they could not love God with all their Hearts, and keep his Commandments, as God required in circumciſed *Jews*. Regeneration, as it ſignifies Growth in Grace, to which the New-Birth, preciſely taken, is but the firſt Step, has various Degrees, which, I think, will not be completely finiſh'd till we leave the World. Then what Abſurdity is it, in the firſt Step and imperfect Degree, to attribute it unto Infants? Or if, in our Author's

Author's Judgment, this cannot be, let him reconcile his Doctrine with that of his Party just now quoted out of their *Confession of Faith*.

When Christ urges the Necessity of Regeneration, he grounds it upon something that accompanies our Nativity into this World. For this is the Reason he immediately gives: *That which is born of the Flesh, is Flesh:* To which he opposes the Birth of the Spirit; *and that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit.* Two Births are here plainly in opposition. And when is the First, but when we come into the World? And when the Second, but when we come into the Church, or Kingdom of God? Can Mr. *Gale* assign another Time, Season, or Juncture for People to be born of the Flesh, beside that of their coming into this World? If he cannot, something comes with us all into this World, that makes it necessary for us all to be born of Water and of the Spirit; which, in Mr. *Gale*'s own Sense, is to be baptiz'd and regenerated. Infants are certainly born of the Flesh, and come attended with Original Sin into the World. Therefore have they the like need of Baptismal Regeneration, that others have. For where the Disease is common, let the Cure and Remedy be the same. The Ground and Reason is in them, which is the Corruption of sinful Flesh; and, consequently, the Regeneration must be theirs, or they cannot see the Kingdom of God.

Let Mr. *Gale* make the most of this he can; we may defy his Criticisms, or little Quibbles, when they come in Competition with plain Gospel Truth. Or, if a *Pelagian* he really is in this Article, let him fairly throw off the Mask, and take up the Cudgels in that baffled Cause; I trust in God, we shall never decline the Combat.

The other Branch of Original Sin is Guilt, which infers an Obligation to Punishment. And this is at large confess'd by the *Antipædobaptists*, who own

it due to all People, for *Adam*'s Offence, in the utmoſt Extent of God's vindictive Wrath and Juſtice. But from this Guilt, which renders all Men obnoxious to eternal Puniſhment, there is no poſſible Releaſe, but by the Mediation of Chriſt Jeſus. *For as in* Adam *all die, ſo in Chriſt muſt all be made alive*, if ever they recover from that Death: *Neither is there Salvation in any other; for there is no other Name under Heaven given among Men whereby we muſt be ſaved*, Acts iv. 12. *Nor can any one come to the Father, but by the Son, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life*, John xiv. 6.

As this is exceeding plain, ſo it is no leſs plain, that every living Soul muſt have an Intereſt in Chriſt by a Spiritual Fellowſhip and Conjunction with him, before the Merits of his Death will be applied to him for Grace, Pardon and Salvation. To his Body, the Church, they muſt ſome way or other be united, as living Members of the ſame. For by that means they become united to him, who is the Head of that organized Body. So we read, *Chriſt is the Head of the Church, and he is the Saviour of the Body*, Eph. v. 23. Of none elſe can he be the Saviour, becauſe they have no Relation to, nor Communion with him. From the Head it is that the animal and vital Spirits flow down into the human Body, to quicken and act it in all its Parts; and no vital or ſenſitive Supply can a Member receive from the Head, when once it is ſever'd from the Body. So from Chriſt, the Head, it is, that all the ſaving Influences of Grace deſcend into the Church, his Body, to animate and act every Member of it in his Spiritual State and Capacity. Therefore is he bound to *hold the Head, from which all the Body by Joints and Bands having Nouriſhment miniſtred, and knit together, increaſeth with the Increaſe of God*, Col. ii. 19. Which is alſo taught in thoſe darker Words, *Eph.* iv. 16. *But if any one abide not in him, he is as*

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a Branch parted from the Tree, dryed up and withered, John xv. 6. *For he that hath the Son, hath Life; and he that hath not the Son, hath not Life*, 1 John v. 12.

Matters ſtanding in this Poſture, as God was pleaſed to order them, it remains for us to enquire, What means he hath appointed to incorporate us into the Body of Chriſt, that we may thereby communicate in his Grace and Merits? And if the Scripture-Account we will take for this, there is but one regular and ordinary Way, ſince Chriſt died, to be ſo incorporated. And that is, The Sacrament of Baptiſm in its full and complete Signification. For ſo it comprehends the Water and the Spirit; or the outward Symbol and the inward Grace. In which Senſe it is properly the Laver of Regeneration. A lame and imperfect Idea *they* give of it, who repreſent it only by the external Part, without the interior Form; as if it were as bare and naked a Ceremony as any in the *Jews* Religion. They had as good, in the Deſcription of a Man, to forget his Soul, as preſent us with that crippliſh Notion of Chriſt's Baptiſm. For he always intended that the Adminiſtration of it ſhould be accompanied with the regenerating Grace of his Spirit; and it always is, where there is no Obſtacle and Impediment on Mens Part.

Baptiſm is therefore the Gate that lets us into the Church, and unites us to the Body of Chriſt, as the Church is the Gate of Heaven. By that Ordinance Infants are united to their Saviour, and made Members of his Body. So they have viſibly a Covenant-Relation with him by the outward Ordinance, and inviſibly by the Spirit. *For as many of you as have been baptized into Chriſt, have put on Chriſt*, Gal. iii. 27. *And by one Spirit we are all baptized into one Body*, 1 Cor. xii. 13. Both the Parts together make the Saving Baptiſm in St. *Peter*. So the Work is made very ſure to Infants in God's own Method;

and certain we are, they may thus be ſaved; becauſe they are joyned to Chriſt, and both the Guilt and Defilement of Original Sin are taken off by the Application of his Merits. The *Baptiſts*, following Dr. *Taylor*, talk of many Ways that God has to ſave Infants: But can they ſpecify any one of thoſe Ways beſides Baptiſm? Or can they juſtify it by Revelation and a Covenant Promiſe? If not, where is their Scripture Warrant for their Doctrine? Will they forſake God's Method, to follow their own Fancies? This is not Faith, but Preſumption; It is not to follow God, but to lead and teach him. 'Tis a Covenant Security we deſire for the Salvation of Infants, and not the vain Surmiſes of Men.

For ſince they are born under the Guilt and Taint of Sin, there is no Relief for them, but by the Covenant of Grace eſtabliſhed in the Blood of Chriſt; no Inſurance of that Covenant, but by the Seal of Baptiſm with Water and the Spirit; and without this, there is no Communion with their Saviour. If in their Firſt Birth they are deſtroyed by Sin, the Second Birth alone muſt ſave them. Regenerated, therefore, they muſt be by the Holy Ghoſt, or elſe from God's Word we have no promiſing Proſpect of their Salvation. *For if any one has not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his*, Rom. viii. 9. But that Spirit is the only inward Bond that unites them to their Saviour: *He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit*, 1 *Cor.* vi 17. He has one Spirit with Chriſt, which is common between him and all the true Members of his Body. This is the Spirit which inlivens and animates them all, is moſt properly their Soul as Chriſtians, and puts them in a ſaveable Condition.

The Spirit of Chriſt Infants muſt therefore have, before they can belong to Chriſt, and be ſaveed by his redeeming Grace. For there is no other Principle of a new Life to the Lapſed Sons of *Adam*, and no other Bond of real Union with their Saviour. If this quick-

quickning Spirit they have not, who can promiſe them Salvation? But if him they have, who can forbid them Water to be baptized? But in a State of Salvation the *Baptiſts* ſay that Infants are. If ſo, they are already, by Grace, the inviſible Members of his Body. Baptize them, then, and make them viſible Members of the ſame. For are they his, or are they not? If not, where is their Salvation thro' Chriſt? Or can they be ſaved, when parted from his Body? that is, without their Head, and without their Saviour? But if his they are, by a gracious Communication of his Spirit, give, preſent and dedicate them to him by Chriſtian Baptiſm, will he diſallow your Act? Will he reject and refuſe his own, whom he has bought with his precious Blood, and, according to you, has made already inviſible Members of his Body? Agnize their Right and Spiritual Relation to their Head? Sign them with his proper Mark and Seal? Give them the Baptiſm of Water, if you give them that of the Spirit; for in that caſe, both or none they ought to have. But if you give them neither, never pretend to give them Salvation.

For, tell me, Where and how is Salvation to be had out of the Church, or Chriſt's Body? Or, what hope of Heaven can they have, who are neither viſible nor inviſible Members of that Body? Once this was an Appropriation of the *Jews*, becauſe they alone were God's Church. *For Salvation is of the* Jews, John iv. 22. Now, for the ſame Reaſon, it is appropriated to the Church of Chriſt; for he is the Saviour of his Body, and of that alone. Therefore are they firſt added to the Church, who ſhall be ſaved, *Acts* ii. 47. And to the Head they muſt all hold. Nor is there Salvation in any other, or Life to him that has not Chriſt. But in what a deſperate Caſe and Condition they all are, who are out of the Church, the

Holy Ghoſt informs us by St. *Paul*'s Mouth, *Eph.* ii. 11, 12. *In Time paſt ye were Gentiles in the Fleſh, who are called Uncircumciſion*; —— *during which Time ye were without Chriſt, being Aliens from the Commonwealth of* Iſrael, *and Strangers from the Covenants of Promiſe, having no Hope, and without God in the World.* And alſo, 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 13. they are ſaid to have no Hope.

Wherefore, if all the Gentile World, by being Aliens to the Commonwealth of *Iſrael*, i. e. out of God's Church, and Strangers to the Covenants of Promiſe, are in a hopeleſs Condition for that Reaſon, without God and without Chriſt, from whom alone Salvation cometh; what do thoſe Gentlemen mean, who leave their Infants out of the Church and Covenant, without God and without Chriſt, in the ſame hopeleſs State with Gentiles and Infidels, and diſpute hotly for it, as for ſome ſingular Privilege and Advantage? Is this their Concern and Affection for the tender Fruit of their own Bowels? Or is this the Right way to inſure their Salvation, and intitle them to Heaven, when they place them among the Children of Unbelievers?

What is incumbent on thoſe Gentlemen to ſhew, is this: They muſt prove, that Infants being unſanctified out of the Church and Covenant, and laid on the ſame Level with thoſe of profeſſed Heathens, are there in as hopeful Capacity of Salvation, as thoſe Infants are, who are admitted by Baptiſm into Chriſt's Church and into the Covenant of Grace, and ſo become united to their Head and Saviour. The Scripture Authorities here produced to the contrary, they muſt reconcile with their own Opinions by true and unconſtrained Interpretations. And if the Force of theſe Authorities they can fairly evade, then they muſt bring other Scripture Evidences, which do more plainly prove the Salvation of Heathens and Infants, that are out of the Church, in the

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ſame State with Heathens, than our Evidences do the contrary. If thoſe Things they cannot do, let them not pretend hereafter to hold and believe with the Holy Scriptures; but confeſs, that their Faith and Practice are not only un-ſcriptural, but very directly anti-ſcriptural.

It is not what they may hope and preſume without Promiſe or Scripture-Authority, that we can ſafely rely upon, but what God has declared in his Word to be his Will. Obſerve his Rules they ought, and not venture to preſcribe to his Juſtice or Mercy what they themſelves do think convenient. When Infants are left out of the Church and Covenant, and Salvation nevertheleſs aſſured unto them, his Word and Revealed Methods are forſaken, and we are clearly carryed off into the wild Paths of *Deiſm* and *Natural Religion*; by which our Lapſed and Guilty State, we may rather be ſure that we ſhall not be ſaved, then that we ſhall. For, take the *Baptiſts* Way, and their Warrant for it, then if ye can be ſure that the Children of *Jews*, *Turks* and *Pagans* will be ſaved, you have juſt the ſame Security for your own. But if by Baptiſm you bring them within the Church, and intitle them to Covenanted Grace and Mercy, through Chriſt their Saviour, ye make ſure Work in God's Way. Whereas to leave them without, is to ramble in a Wilderneſs of Mazes and Uncertainties, by the bare Light of Natural Reaſon; which is nothing but to make random Work, and put all to hazards, becauſe there is no Promiſe.

The only pretended Proof for the Salvation of unbaptized Infants, I could yet find in the *Baptiſts* Writings, is in *Mark* x. 14. *Of ſuch is the Kingdom of Heaven.* This is ſaid by Chriſt of unbaptized Infants, for ſuch are thoſe he ſpoke of, ſays Mr. *Gale*, Let. 11. 421. But, alas! how precarious and impertinent is this Allegation?

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1. It is precarious; for how does he know thoſe Infants were unbaptized? Does the ſacred Text give him this Information? Or does its Silence prove it, becauſe the Scripture muſt be underſtood to deny what it does not record? If this proves his Point, we can, by the ſame *Medium*, prove Perſons to be baptized by St. *Paul*, or his Order, without any previous Profeſſion of Faith and Repentance, and without hearing a Syllable of the Goſpel preached. And the Inſtance is in *Lydia*'s Houſhold, *Acts* xvi. 14, 15. She herſelf heard and believed; but neither of the Two is noted of her Family that were at the ſame Time baptized. And by that *Medium*, we can alſo prove, that none of the Apoſtles were baptized in Chriſt's Time, becauſe it is not recorded in the Goſpel. Indeed, throughout the whole Courſe of his Miniſtration on Earth, there is not a ſingle Perſon nominated that was baptized. Only we read in general, that his Diſciples baptized; and, as we ſuppoſe, not without his Order. But how, whom, where, when, and in that preciſe Age, we are not told. So that, for ought we know, thoſe Infants might be baptized, as well as other Diſciples. For we have as much Evidence for their Baptiſm, as for that of the Adult.

2. It is impertinent; becauſe thoſe Infants, if Males, were certainly circumciſed, unleſs he can prove them to be leſs than Eight Days old, which is highly improbable. Their Parents were not of a Heatheniſh Extract and Profeſſion; for *the Childrens Bread was not to be given unto Dogs. Jews* thoſe Perſons were that brought them unto Chriſt. A good Opinion they had of Jeſus, if they did not alſo believe him to be the Meſſias; therefore they beſought his Prayer and Bleſſing for the little Children. What then if thoſe Infants were not baptized? Were they not certainly within the Covenant and Church of God? And this, if Males, by the Right of Circum-

cumcision, which was then the Initiatory Ordinance still in Force, and serving for the Ends that Baptism did in Times ensuing? Whereby, I think, Baptism, in that Juncture, was not so necessary a Rite to make Disciples, as afterwards, when Circumcision was removed.

What Reason, now, is there to put unbaptized Infants and the Children of Heathens, to stand on the same Bottom with those of circumcised *Jews*, who where then God's true Church and peculiar People? Strange confounding Work, to lay *Jews* and *Gentiles*, circumcised and uncircumcised, baptized and unbaptized, on the same Foot and Level! When Christ says, *Salvation was of the* Jews did it now all on a sudden become equally common to them, and to uncircumcised, or unbaptized Gentiles? No wonder if some People can be most confident and assured of Victory, when they think such Arguments as these will pass Muster, and carry the Day.

But if, in our Adversaries Judgment, Salvation is sure to dying Infants, and God will receive them into the Church Triumphant, will he refuse to receive them into the Church Militant? Are they qualified for the one, while they be unqualified for the other? Or fit Members for the Kingdom of Glory, when they are unfit to be Members of the Kingdom of Grace? And will God admit them into eternal Communion with himself and his Saints in Heaven, but not admit them into Communion on Earth? The former is abundantly the greatest Blessing, and the God who frankly gives them that, will not grudge to give them the other, that is least. A large Step it is from the Church, to Heaven, but a larger still from the unbaptized and unchristened World, thither. His ordinary way of Promotion is, to bring his People to the Means, and then to the End; or to add them to the Church, that they may be saved:

ſaved. But in the Caſe of Infants, all, it ſeems, muſt be extraordinary and beſide the Rules. Yet the Church on Earth and that in Heaven are but one, though differing in Condition. Since, therefore, he makes Infants Members of it when they die, it is no overbold Adventure, if we imitate his Goodneſs, and make them Members of it while they live. For, can he diſallow the Method we take, when we do but follow his own Gracious Precedent? Or when we do but what he himſelf does in a far more eminent Degree and Manner? Yea, and what his Church always did from *Abraham* to *Chriſt*, by his own expreſs Command and Order?

Yet ſhall I not diſmiſs that Paragraph of our Author, without remarking the notable Similitude he uſes to clear off *John* iii. 5. "The Angels ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Glory, tho' not baptized "with Water; and we may reaſonably ſuppoſe, that "unbaptized Infants ſhall do the ſame: And ſo the "Text refers to neither of them."

The Suppoſition is as reaſonable, as the Expreſſion is exact. Angels ſhall enter into a Kingdom in which they now are, and from which they were never excluded. And this I ſuppoſe is good Senſe, or ſound Doctrine. But Chriſt ſpeaks there of human Perſons born of the Fleſh, that was originally corrupted by the Fall; and ſtood, therefore, in need of a new Birth for their Reſtauration. And to confront the Argument, we are now put in Mind of glorious Spirits, who need no Regeneration, becauſe they never ſinned. Where then is the Parallel? If Mankind ſhall inherit Glory on the ſame Foot with the Holy Angels, away with Scripture, Sacraments, Redemption, Grace, Chriſt, and the whole Oeconomy of our Religion, as needleſs and ſuperfluous. Sure, when our Author drew this wild Compariſon, he thought *Pædobaptiſts* were all ſo faſt aſleep, that they would never look into his Reflections.

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But farther; "If there be any Mercy in God "who is Goodneſs itſelf, then all Infants, who "could never offend him, ſhall aſſuredly be ſaved." This is no Oracle from God's Mouth, but from Mr. *Gale*'s Breaſt; who builds on the natural Notices and Conceptions he has of God. Could Infants never offend God in their firſt Parents? Is not this his own *Pelagianiſm?* Nay, has he not taken a large Stretch beyond the Inventors of that old Hereſy, who held Baptiſm neceſſary for the Admiſſion of Infants into Heaven? For, ſuppoſe Infants as innocent as the Holy Angels, yet as they were never created in Heaven, like thoſe Bleſſed Spirits, how does he know that their bare Innocency will bring them into Heaven? Was not immortal Life in an earthly Paradiſe, all their Due by Promiſe? And what neceſſary Connexion has that with Heaven? They who by Gift were Inhabitants of the one, could not without another Gift or Act of Grace, be Heirs of the other. And ſince a Forfeiture was made of their Firſt Tenure, the Second they can never have without the Intervention of a Mediator, and the Application of his Merits. God has abundant Mercy and Goodneſs, but he deals it out by Covenant on his own Terms, to a Generation of Lapſed Men, who can never claim it, and everlaſting Glory by it, as their Birth-right. And we had better keep to his Methods in diſpenſing Goſpel Grace and eternal Salvation, than preſume to guide and teach him by the Laws of *Deiſm*. Arbitrary he is in thoſe Diſpenſations, and no farther bound than he has been pleaſed to ingage by free Promiſe. I, therefore, affirm nothing about the future State of Infants dying unbaptized, but ingenuouſly profeſs my perfect Ignorance. And ſo would our *Antagoniſts* do likewiſe, had they but the Modeſty and Humility, *that dares not be wiſe beyond what is written.* Were this Rule obſerved, they would ſuſpend their Judgment;

ment; and we ſhould meet with fewer Dogmatizers in the Chriſtian World.

When we urge the Neceſſity of baptizing Infants, that they may be freed from Original Sin, and inſur'd of Salvation, the Queſtion is commonly put unto us, Do you think that all Infants dying unbaptized, are damned? And that no Perſons can be ſaved, that are not viſibly in the Church? To ſuch Queſtioniſts, I return St. *Paul*'s Words in Anſwer; *What have we to do to judge them that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth*, 1 Cor. v. 12, 13. To his Tribunal, therefore, we wholly leave them to be diſpoſed of as he pleaſes. It is not what we, or others think, that is our Rule, but what he has revealed in his Word; and we go not a Step farther in paſſing Judgment on Aliens from the Commonwealth of *Iſrael*, and Strangers to the Covenant of Promiſe, than he has warranted in the Scripture. Of thoſe that are within the Church, we judge according to his Rules; by which we are all bound to act. For *ſecret Things belong to God*; *but thoſe Things which are revealed, belong to us, and to our Children for Ever, that we may do all the Words of his Law*, Deut. xxxix. 29.

Concerning Infants dying unbaptized, 'tis none of our Buſineſs to prove their Damnation; but they that leave us in the Dark, and them in the miſerable State of Nature, muſt from God's Word prove their Salvation. A Covenant Aſſurance we want in their Behalf, and not human Conjectures and Surmiſes. For, moſt certainly, in *Adam*, they all are under the Sentence of Death, 'till in *Chriſt* they be made alive. And if God be pleaſed to ſave them unbaptized, no Thanks to thoſe who leave them where they were by *Adam*'s Sin, without Help or Remedy, and will not bring them unto Chriſt, nor graft them in his Body for Salvation.

God

God has bound us to his Laws and Ordinances, which we must always keep to when we can; but he has not absolutely bound himself. He may therefore dispense where We cannot.

Declare the *Baptists* do, "That Original Guilt "deserves Damnation, and has justly subjected all "the natural Off-spring of *Adam* to all Miseries, "Spiritual, Temporal and Eternal." Is it not then just in God to inflict upon them what they all deserve? Or, may he not justly keep them in those Miseries, wherein he justly placed them at the first? Nay, I am persuaded, he cannot, with a Salvo to his Justice and Mercy, so much as threaten, what with the same Salvo he cannot execute. Let our Adversaries therefore look to the necessary Consequences of their own Doctrine; they are as much concerned as we.

For God, antecedently to his own Decrees and free Promises, was not obliged to redeem our Lapsed Race by the Death of Christ; nor is he obliged to apply the Merits of his Death to any, but on his own prescribed Terms and Conditions; which if, through the Fault of Men, they be neglected, their Blood will be imputed to themselves. When they are out of the Church and ordinary Methods of Salvation, they stand purely to prerogative Grace, and uncovenanted Mercy; and how far that will extend to their Relief, there is no one knows but God himself. From God's Revealed Will, his holy Word, Salvation can never be proved to be their Lot. Then the Rule holds good to us; *Idem est non esse, & non apparere.* Whereas ours is a certain and safe Way, because it relies upon Promise and Covenant Insurance.

If God's Ordinances and appointed Means of Salvation be despised or neglected, there is a Penalty attending the Neglect; tho', perhaps, it may not be always inflicted to the utmost Extent that rigid Law

Law and Juſtice require. The Male-Child uncircumciſed at eight Days old, had broken the Covenant, and lay obnoxious to Exciſion. *Adam* muſt abſtain from the Tree of Knowledge, and eat of that of Life, if he purpoſed to preſerve his Immortality. Had the bitten *Jews* refuſed to direct their Eyes to the brazen Serpent on the Pole, they had inevitably died of their Plagues. *Naaman* had ſtill kept his Leproſy, had he not at laſt ſubmitted to waſh in *Jordan*. The Blind Man muſt have ſo continued, if he had diſdained the Clay and Spittle which our Saviour's Hand had made medicinal for his Cure. I need add no more; but the Reſult is, That our own and Childrens Souls are ſafe enough in God's Hands; but upon Condition we obſerve his Ways and Ordinances.

So this Argument from Original Sin for Infant Baptiſm, goes on theſe Grounds; That Infants loſt the Favour of God, and their Right to immortal Life, by *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion: In which Privileges there is no Poſſibility for them to be re-inſtated, but by the Redemption of Chriſt Jeſus. That they can never injoy the Benefits of his Redemption, unleſs they have ſuch a Union and Fellowſhip with him, as belongs to the Members of his Body. But that Fellowſhip and Union cannot ordinarily be obtained but by the Baptiſm of Water, and never without that of the Holy Ghoſt. Whence it follows, that they ſhould be baptized.

II. My next Argument for Infant-Baptiſm, ſhall be raiſed from a Paſſage related by the Three Evangeliſts; *Matt.* xix. 13, &c. *Mark* x. 13, &c. *Luke* xviii. 15, &c. In them we read, that little Children, who by St. *Luke* are called Infants, were brought to Chriſt to receive his Bleſſing by Prayer and Impoſition of his Hands. Some of his Diſciples, more officious then diſcreet, interpoſed to hinder it with Rebukes. At which Chriſt was much diſpleaſed,

sed, and commanded, saying, *Suffer little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the Kingdom of God*, or the Kingdom of Heaven. And he took them up in his Arms, put his Hands upon them, and blessed them. Also he proposed them as Patterns to other Persons for Entrance and Admission into the Kingdom of God.

This is the Account: But if we should mind Mr. *Gale*'s Censures, we should never be so hardy as to alledge it in behalf of Infant-Baptism hereafter. "For (says he, with his usual Modesty) what is "there, I beseech you, in the whole Matter, which "can make our Adversaries fasten on this Place? "It can only be the Mention of Children: And they "might as well have cited all the Passages in Scripture "where Children are named." Not so well, I can assure him, for Circumstances are very different. Afterwards says he, in the next Page, which is *Let.* XI. *p.* 431. "Dr. *Hammond* himself reckons this "among the more imperfect ways of Proving the "Point. But Dr. *Whitby* is pleased to improve the "Passage to the utmost Advantage;" (though what Advantage for his Design he could give to many other Places of Scripture where Children are named, I cannot see) "and he being in general so very fair "and sincere a Writer, and comprehending the "whole Substance of what can be urged from the "Place, I will examine what he has said." And yet the Doctor, for all his Fairness, and usual Solidity, as Mr. *Gale* says of him elsewhere, does by-and-by but directly beg the Question, *p.* 433. And indeed nothing at all could be urged from the Place beside Imprudence and Impertinency, if what our Author had said just before, was true. But leaving his Censures and Examination for the present, I shall make these Remarks on the foresaid Passages of the Evangelists.

1. The Action of coming to Chriſt does frequently ſignify, according as it is circumſtanced, *the coming unto him as a Diſciple.* So it means, *Matt.* xi. 28. *John* iii. 26. and v. 40. and vi. 35, 44, 65. and vii. 37. Alſo to come unto God, *is to come as a Worſhipper and Believer*, Heb. vii. 25. and xi. 6. And in the ſame Senſe it is likewiſe uſed in the Old Teſtament, as *Jer.* ii. 31. *Ezek.* xxxiii. 31. The Word *Proſelyte* is derived from a *Greek* Verb, that ſignifies, *to come unto.* And hence a Scholar, or Diſciple, was called φοιτητὴς, from φοιτάω, *to come unto* or *frequent one's School.*

We have Reaſon to think Chriſt means the ſame thing here by the Expreſſion, when he ſays, *Suffer little Children to come unto me.* For he received and embraced them as his own, or as thoſe to whom he bore a particular Love and Regard, and that peculiarly belonged unto him; and he bleſſed them alſo, which certainly imported a Spiritual Bleſſing, that appropriated them to himſelf, as the Children of Grace that were within the Church and Covenant. Alſo he declares, That of ſuch as them was the Kingdom of Heaven: Which could never be true of them, unleſs they were his Diſciples, and ingrafted in his Body: For, by the Scripture Account, no others go to Heaven. Regenerated they muſt be in order to that, and a Spiritual Relation they muſt have to Chriſt. And if Mr. *Gale* denies this, he deſtroys the Neceſſity of Chriſt's Redemption, and of our Spiritual Union with him, and, conſequently, the whole Goſpel Oeconomy. If it ſeems ſtrange to ſay, that Infants are Chriſt's Diſciples, I hope to prove undeniably in its proper place, that they may be ſo, and are ſo called in the New Teſtament. Yea, upon Grounds already laid down, if thoſe hold good, they muſt be ſo in one Senſe or other, before they can go to Heaven. But to give more Light and Strength to what is here advanced;

2. Writers

2. Writers in the primitive Times understood this Passage and Expression of coming to Christ, to signify coming as his Disciples, or to be made so by Baptism. Dr. *Whitby* quotes some of them upon *Matt.* xix. 13, 14. of which Mr. *Gale* takes no Notice. Even *Tertullian* himself, *Lib. de Baptist. Chap.* xviii. allows this to be the Sense, though he was singular in his Opinion about the Baptism of Infants; as he was also about that of Batchelors and Virgins, Widowers and Widows of all Ages, 'till they were either married, or confirmed in Continency. For the Objection made against him in behalf of baptizing Infants, *Suffer little Children to come unto me*, he freely passes in that Sense, without Contradiction, but only endeavours to put it by; *Veniant dum adolescunt, veniant dum discunt*, &c. Let them come to be baptized when they grow up, let them come when they learn. And seeing he allowed that to be the Sense, he did but apparently argue against Christ, and in that Case prefer his Judgment before his Saviour's, when he would have little Children detained from Baptism 'till they grew up to know Christ; while Christ himself was for their coming to him in their present Infant State; *i.e.* for their being then baptized, as *Tertullian* took the Phrase.

3. If in this Sense the Words should be understood, then here is a general Command for bringing Infants to Christ, or suffering them to be brought, and so to come, that they may receive his Blessing, and be baptized as his Disciples and Heirs of his Kingdom. For the Command is indefinite and universal; without Limitation of Time, or Restriction of Privilege to the present Children. No Personal Favour or Affection was it to them alone who were then on the Spot of Action: But it is communicated to all others that should be brought to him, as they were. Little Children that so come, must

be permitted to come without Inhibition, under Pain of his Diſpleaſure.

When I ſay, it was no Perſonal Favour and Affection them more than others, I mean it of others that are in their Quality and Condition. But diſtinguiſhed they muſt be from the Children of Infidels, who are out of the Covenant, and will not be brought to Chriſt by the unbelieving Parents: Tho' if others have them in their Power, and bring them to him, the Church refuſes not to baptize them upon the Faith of the Undertakers who preſent them, and ingage for their Chriſtian Education; and who, upon thoſe Accounts, become their Ghoſtly Fathers, or Spiritual Parents. But the Affection and Treatment Chriſt ſhewed to thoſe Infants, ſprang from their being the Children of God's People, and within his Church and Covenant. And this Reaſon holds for the Children of Chriſtian Parents to the World's End. In thoſe Reſpects they were God's Diſciples, *Iſa.* viii. 16. And no wonder if Chriſt Embraced and Bleſſed them as his own. And if baptized they were not at that Time, there was no need they ſhould be; becauſe that as the Chriſtian Church was not then founded on our Saviour's Death, nor ſo clearly diſtinguiſhed from the *Jewiſh*; ſo Circumciſion was not aboliſhed, nor Baptiſm made the Initiatory Ordinance to all Nations in its ſtead.

4. The Command being general and unlimitted in reſpect of Times, and all Infants ordered to come unto Chriſt that ſhould be brought, they can come to him no otherwiſe but by Baptiſm ever ſince he is gone to Heaven. By Prayers the Infants of Chriſtians may be recommended to him, and ſo may thoſe of Heathens too. But here is no local Motion, nor Perſonal Approach of Diſciples, which Chriſt meaneth, as included in the Words. But when they are brought to his ſaving Ordinance, and preſented to him in the Congregation, where he has ingaged himſelf

ſelf to be; this is a proper coming unto Chriſt, and a Union with him by Church Memberſhip. For they are then joined to him as their Head, by the Mediation of his Spirit in that Sacrament. The only way therefore, that they can now come unto Chriſt, let them come, or let them be brought; elſe we may incur his Diſpleaſure, by our Prohibitions. For if we refuſe to dedicate and devote them to him after the only manner that is now left us to do it in, we hinder their coming, and do them Wrong. Ready he is to receive, embrace and bleſs them, and it is not for us to keep them off, and put a Bar and Obſtacle to his Grace.

5. The Bleſſing Chriſt imparted to thoſe Infants, was of a Spiritual Nature, relating to the Intereſt of their Souls. For he conſidered them as the Holy Seed that were incorporated in his Church, and for this Reaſon they were the ſpecial Objects of his Love and Bleſſing. If therefore, the Bleſſing he gave them was ſpiritual, the Communion of Grace they had with him, whereof Circumciſion was then the Seal. For the ſame Grace and Bleſſing, the Infants of Chriſtian Parents muſt ſtill come unto him, according to his general Command; whereof they receive the Seal in Baptiſm. For we need not doubt but treat them he will, as thoſe were treated, ſince his Affection to them is the ſame; ſince they are by Deſcent in the ſame Quality with them, and do come within the Limits of his Command. That he ſo conſidered, and ſo bleſſed thoſe Children, I gather from theſe Reaſons:

1. What thoſe that brought them deſired and expected for thoſe Infants, the Goſpel ſays, was to pray for them, and touch them. Their Deſign he approved of, and therefore he anſwered their Expectation. Impoſition of his Hands, anſwered to their deſire of having them touched, and his Bleſſing to Prayer. Chriſt never uſed Prayer in healing the

Sick. That would have derogated from his Divine Power, as if he wrought his Miracles in ſuch a precarious and dependent manner, as his Diſciples did. And to impart a Bleſſing by laying on of Hands, was a Form in uſe as long ago as *Jacob*'s Time, *Gen.* xlviii. 14, 17.

2. If he conſidered them only in the State of Nature, and imparted to them but a Temporal Bleſſing, it had been foreign to his Purpoſe, to talk of the Kingdom of Heaven, and to propoſe them as Patterns to ſuch as would enter thither. For what Affinity is there between thoſe Matters? If Heaven belonged to thoſe Infants, in a Spiritual Eſtate they muſt be conſidered, and a Spiritual Bleſſing they muſt receive. For nothing elſe qualified them for it, and could promote their eternal Happineſs. And in no other reſpects could they be Patterns to thoſe that ſhould go to Heaven. To heal their Bodies, and bleſs them in Civil or Temporal Matters, had no Relation to that Affair.

3. Nothing can be aſſign'd to which his Bleſſing truly and properly related, unleſs it was Spiritual. Mr. *Gale* expreſſes himſelf cautiouſly, when he ſays; "It is probable enough the Children were brought "to Chriſt to be healed by him, ſince it was the "Lord's Cuſtom frequently to heal by laying on "his Hands." *p.* 431. And ſo it might be in other Matters. But his Caution forſook him, when he preſently adds; "Though 'tis only ſaid, They "brought them to have his Hands laid upon them." For St. *Matthew* ſays, They brought them alſo that he ſhould pray. But Mr. *Keach* knowing that Probabilities were ſlender Proofs, had more Spirit and Vivacity, as they ſay ſome blind Creatures are moſt bold, and roundly aſſerts; "No doubt thoſe Chil-"dren were brought to Chriſt to be healed of ſome "bodily Diſtemper. And again, Our Saviour was "then healing the Sick." And yet the Three E-

"van-

vangelists that relate the Passage, say, He was not then healing the Sick, but preaching the Gospel. Judge now what is to be thought of such Men. But I cannot subscribe to their Opinion. For,

1. It is no where intimated in the Three Gospels, that those Infants were Sick. 2. Christ never prayed in healing the Sick; yet Prayer they desired who brought them to Christ. 3. It is not likely the charitable Disciples would have rebuked them, had this been the Case; when they used rather to intercede with him in behalf of such Miserable Objects for their Cure, *Matt.* xv. 23. And, 4. Never in the Gospel is his healing of the Sick, called, A blessing of them; nor did he use to imbrace, or take them up in his Arms for that Purpose.

Since therefore no Civil or Temporal Blessing can with Reason be specified, as communicated by Christ in that Blessing; it remains, that it must be Spiritual. And certainly it was not fruitless and ineffectual, but operated according to his Intent. And the like Blessing he has in Reserve for our Infants, for which we do bring and present them to him in his Church.

6. Of those Infants it is not only declared, that of such is the Kingdom of God; but also they are made Exemplars of Innocence to every one that will be a true Member of God's Church, and go to Heaven. I do not think they are here made Emblems of the single Vertue of Humility; but that was at another Time, and on a particular Occasion, to check the Ambition of his Disciples, *Matt.* xviii. 4. But those Infants having received the Grace of Circumcision, and presently after our Saviour's Blessing, are proposed as Patterns of Innocency in general to all God's People. For every one that will indeed enter the Church of God, and thereby hope for Salvation, must, in his Temper and Disposition, be such a worthy Member of it, as those Infants

were. This I take to be our Lord's Meaning; as take Mr. *Gale*'s Reaſon to the contrary, to be inſufficient.

"For though he grants, that the Kingdom of "Heaven does almoſt univerſally through the "whole Goſpel mean the Diſpenſation of the Meſſias, "yet it cannot mean ſo here; becauſe in St. *Mark* "x. 15. our Lord ſays; *Whoſoever ſhall not receive* "*the Kingdom of God as a little Child, he ſhall not* "*enter therein*; i. e. into Glory; for into the "Church the greateſt Villains may be admitted, "if they conceal their Wickedneſs; ſo that he muſt "mean they ſhall not enter into his Glorious King-"dom." They may enter indeed with their Bodies, but not with their Souls; or be Members of the Church in the ſight of Men, but not ſo in the ſight of God. This they can in no wiſe be, as St. *Luke*'s Words are, while they are concealed Villains. When our Lord propoſed thoſe Innocent Members for their Examples, what had he to do but to let them know, what would make them true Members of the Kingdom of Grace, that they might come thereby to the Kingdom of Glory? For the one is neceſſarily preparative to the other. His Buſineſs was to inſtruct them in their Duty on Earth, that they might go to Heaven. Subjects of the Kingdom of Grace he ſet before them, to let them know, what ſort of Subjects they muſt be of the ſame Kingdom, if thereby they expected any real Advantage. This might very well be Chriſt's Meaning; eſpecially ſince thoſe Two Kingdoms in the Main are but One.

St. *Luke*'s Words are ſtrong and home; *ſhall in no wiſe enter therein*, Chap. xviii. 17. But no ſtronger than the ſame Expreſſion is to our purpoſe, *Rev.* xxi. 27. *And there ſhall in no wiſe enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatſoever worketh Abomination, or maketh a Lie.* Such Sinners ſhall in no wiſe enter into *the Holy City, the New Jeruſalem*;

that

that came down from God out of Heaven, ver. 2. By virtue whereof *the Tabernacle of God is with Men*, ver. 3. Which again is called, *That great City, the New Jerusalem, descending out of Heaven from God*, ver. 10. *In the Light* whereof *the Nations of them which are saved do walk*; *and the Kings of the Earth, and the Nations do bring their Glory and Honour into it*, ver. 24, 26. Which Descriptions do necessarily determine it to be the Church of Christ on Earth, or the Kingdom of Grace, not the Kingdom of Glory. For this last Kingdom will never descend and come down from Heaven to Men; but they will ascend, or be conveyed up into it. Nor will Kings and Nations carry their Glory and Honour thither, but leave it all behind, as it is Civil or Temporal; and receive another Glory there, that is Spiritual and Eternal. This Sense is clearly evinced by *Grotius* in his Annotations on that Chapter; and it justifies the Interpretation I have given to our Saviour's Words, in Opposition to Mr. *Gale*. And so those Infants might belong to the Dispensation of the Messias, and to the Kingdom of Grace, or be Members of Christ's Church, notwithstanding Mr. *Gale*'s Exception.

What follows in Mr. *Gale* of Infants being admitted on this Ground to the Lord's Supper, as well as to Baptism, has been spoken to before, and thither I refer him.

Such Objections as are made against us to this effect; "If those Infants were brought to be baptized, why did the Disciples rebuke them for it? "Why did not Christ order them to be baptized? "And why did he not thereby prevent our Errors, "when one Word from his Mouth would have done "it?" I say, of these and the like Objections, that their Force is enervated by this one Consideration; Circumcision did to them supply all the Ends of Bap-

Baptiſm. More might be ſaid, but this, when duly conſidered, is enough.

Let Mr. *Gale* lay all together, and ſee whether we might as well urge any Place of Scripture where Children are named, for our purpoſe, as this before us. Whatever Dr. *Whitby* has done, I am not ſo vain as to think that I my ſelf have managed this, or indeed any other Argument, to the beſt Advantage. But Mr. *Gale* muſt ſometimes magnify his Adverſaries, to magnify his own Victory; or rather indeed to apprize the World of the deplorable Badneſs of our Cauſe, ſince its beſt Champions can ſay no more for it, and he can ſo eaſily baffle them.

Having mentioned *Tertullian*, I ſhall ſtep a little aſide, to ſee how, in Mr. *Gale*'s Account, it fares with that *African* Father. Three things are ſaid of him; 1. That he ſtrenuouſly oppoſed Infant Baptiſm as unlawful. 2. That his Oppoſition of it is no Argument that it was practiſed in his Time. 3. That he has ſome Paſſages in him which are inconſiſtent with that Baptiſm.

1. *Tertullian* ſtrenuouſly oppoſed Infant-Baptiſm; *Let.* XIII. *p.* 528. as a Thing that ought not to be done, *p.* 540. nor adminiſtred to them: He makes it therefore uſeleſs and unlawful to baptize Infants; but does not intimate ſo of unmarried Perſons; only he adviſes ſuch as are in danger of ſinning, to delay their being baptized. To know if this be a fair Repreſentation of *Tertullian*'s Mind, we muſt have recourſe to his own Words. They are in that famous Place I have already cited, which I ſhall tranſlate into *Engliſh* as exactly as I am able. Thus, therefore, ſays he.

"According to every body's Condition or Diſpoſi-
" tion, and Age alſo, the Delay of Baptiſm is more
" profitable; eſpecially in the Caſe of little Children.
" For what neceſſity is there to run the Sponſors (or
" Sureties, into Danger? Becauſe both they by Morta-
" lity

" lity may fail in their Promiſes, and be deceived
" by the Increaſe of a bad Temper. The Lord in-
" deed ſaith; *Forbid them not to come unto me.* Let
" them come therefore when they grow up, let them
" come when they learn, whither it is they come.
" Let them be made Chriſtians when they can know
" Chriſt. Wherefore ſhould that Innocent Age ha-
" ſten to the Remiſſion of Sins? More Caution is
" uſed in Secular Matters, ſo that an earthly Sub-
" ſtance, or Inheritance, is not there intruſted,
" where the Divine is. Let them know to ſeek or
" ask Salvation, that you may ſeem to give it to
" one that ſeeketh. *Non minore de cauſâ innupti*
" *quoque procraſtinandi*, &c. For no leſs Cauſe are
" the Unmarried to be deferred (from Baptiſm) in
" whom Temptation is ready as well in Virginity
" by Ripeneſs of Years, as in Widower-ſhip by
" Vacation, till they either marry, or are confirm-
" ed in Continency. If any underſtand the Weight
" of Baptiſm, they will rather fear the Obtaining
" of it, than the Delay. Faith is intire, and ſure
" of Salvation.

This is the Paſſage at large, and not a Word ſpoken in it of the Sin and Unlawfulneſs of baptizing little Children; but only of the No-Neceſſity of it, and of the Hazards and Inexpediency of it to them, and the Sponſors. And does Mr. *Gale* know no Difference between unneceſſary and unlawful? Or between Danger and Unfitneſs, and Sin and Guilt? If People may not be in Danger without Sin, there is no living in this World. Infants had not actual Sins, therefore he thought it needleſs to baptize them for that Reaſon; and ſo it was to have them remitted for the preſent. They knew not the Lord, nor the Ends and Weight of Baptiſm; therefore he judged it improper to baptize them; and for all this it might not be unlawful in his Opinion. And whatever he ſays or thought, the ſame might as well

have

have been urged againſt the Circumciſion of Infants.

But be his Reaſons ever ſo ſtrong againſt the baptizing of little Children in their Infancy, he ſays ſtill, there was no leſs Cauſe to defer the baptizing of unmarried Perſons, till they were confirmed in Continency. If he uſes not all the ſame Topics here as there, his Judgment was nevertheleſs the ſame. Or if the Inexpediency was not ſo high in one Caſe as in the other, yet there needs be no Unlawfulneſs in either. Wherefore, if his Judgment was wrong about the Unmarried, as the *Antipædobaptiſts* muſt confeſs, it might be wrong about Infants alſo. This weakens his Authority. This is Mr. *Gale*'s way of arguing, to weaken the Father's Authority, and we are to regard him no farther than his Reaſons compel.

Here is One or Two of that Father's Singularities, for which he is commonly noted by Learned Men and the Chriſtian World. And I take it to be his natural Rigor that betrayed him into ſuch Exceſſes, and induced him, by Anticipation, to favour too much of the *Novatian* Principles, who made Sin irremiſſible after Baptiſm. Whereas the Apoſtles uſed no ſuch Precaution, but baptized Thouſands together upon the Firſt Profeſſion of Faith in the Adult, without any Dread or Apprehenſions of future Dangers, that were too poſſible.

2. "Had Infant-Baptiſm, ſays Mr. *Gale*, been "the ſettled Practice and Judgment of the Church, "and what they thought was ſupported by the Au- "thority and Tradition of the Apoſtles, *&c.* It "can't be imagined, that *Tertullian* ſhould venture "to oppoſe it; or if he did, that he ſhould imploy "no more pains to excuſe what ſeemed to contra- "dict the Doctrine and Practice of the Apoſtles and "the Whole Church, *p.* 510, 511. But the Oppo- "ſition he made, argues only, that ſome in his Time

"among

" many other wild Notions did endeavour to in-
" troduce it, &c."

But may it not as well be said, That *Tertullian*'s arguing against baptizing unmarried Persons, does not imply that unmarried Persons were then commonly baptized, but only that some endeavoured in his Time to introduce it among many other wild Notions; and that if he had known the Church practised it, and thought they had the Apostles Warrant to support their Practice, he had not ventured to oppose it; or if he had, he would have taken more pains to excuse himself, and pleaded more strenuously for his Contradiction to the Apostles and the whole Church? And yet how came he to plead against Christ, and make Infant-Baptism unlawful, as we are now told, when he understood Christ's Words and Command, *Suffer little Children*, &c. to concern that Baptism? Or what more pains need he take, than to prove a Thing unlawful, in order to cry it down? Did he not know St. *Paul*'s Doctrine, that if a Widow *marry*, *she is no Adultress*, Rom. vii. 3. and that so to marry was no uncommon Practice in the Church? How then came he to condemn Second Marriages, as a *Species stupri? Lib. De Exhort. Castit.* c. 9. And how also came *Nazianzen* to give his Advice for the Delay of Infant-Baptism, when Mr. *Gale* cannot deny but it was than settled and common in the Church; and they thought they had Scripture Authority to support it? Let who will justify *Tertullian*'s Conduct, it is easy to see the Weakness of Mr. *Gale*'s Pleas.

3. Out of the same Father he cites some Passages, which annex those Conditions to Baptism and baptized Persons, that are not practicable in an Infant State; and from thence concludes, that *Tertullian* could never allow of Infant-Baptism. And this, as I observed before, is his Method with other ancient Writers. But he needed not have ro-

romaged about for ſuch Teſtimonies and Authorities. He may find good ſtore of the ſame kind in the Books of *Pædobaptiſts* both Antient and Modern. Will he thence infer they do not commonly practiſe *Pædobaptiſm*?

Indeed we ſcarce ever Write or Preach about Baptiſm, but we expreſs what Conditions are requiſite for it in the Suſcipients, and what Obligations baptized Perſons are under to Faith and Obedience. But we underſtand them as binding the Adult to preſent Performance, and Infants to future. Our very Church Catechiſm ſays, Faith and Repentance are required in Perſons to be baptized. How perverſe would it be to conclude from hence, that the Church of *England* admits no Infants unto Baptiſm, becauſe they have not thoſe Conditions? Yet no better Conſtruction do ſome *Antipædobaptiſts* put upon her Words. And ſince we know they egregiouſly pervert her Senſe in this, we do not wonder they deal ſo with the Scriptures and the Fathers. Among the *Jews* it was required in Circumciſed Perſons, that they ſhould *love the Lord their God with all their Hearts and Souls*, and keep his Laws: And our Adverſaries contend that Circumciſion obliged them to keep the whole Law of *Moſes*. Were not Infants then daily circumciſed, becauſe they could not ſo love the Lord, and keep his Laws?

Between Mr. *Gale* and his *Antagoniſt* it is farther diſputed, whether *Tertullian* held ſuch a Neceſſity of Baptiſm for Salvation, as included Infants; ſo that they muſt be baptized for that end, or elſe be counted loſt by his Doctrine. I am perſuaded this Neceſſity might be made appear from his Words, *Lib. De Animâ*, Chap. xxxix. 40. But I need not interfere in that Controverſy.

III. St. *Peter* exhorts the *Jews* that were on the Point of Converſion; *Repent and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, for the Remiſſion*

miſſion of Sins, and ye ſhall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghoſt; *For the Promiſe is to you, and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God ſhall call*, Acts ii. 38, 39. For Two Ends were thoſe *Jews* to be baptized upon their Converſion: One End was to have their Sins forgiven, and this takes off the Guilt and Puniſhment. The other was to *receive the Gift of the Holy Ghoſt*. Infants being tainted with Original Guilt, ſtood in need of Pardon, and being defiled with its Stain, they needed the Sanctification of God's Spirit. For theſe Ends therefore Baptiſm was uſeful to them, as well as their Parents.

Both theſe Ends and Reaſons of Baptiſm were common to the Parents and Children together. And one, if not both, the Apoſtle expreſly ſays, was ſo: *For the Promiſe is to you, and to your Children.* Which Promiſe muſt relate to *the Gift of the Holy Ghoſt* at leaſt, and I think it may include the *Remiſſion of Sins*, by reaſon theſe Two are concomitant: He that is ſanctified, is alſo juſtified; and he that is juſtified, muſt in ſome meaſure be ſanctified. But be it that the Promiſe relates only to one of the Ends, this is ſtill ſufficient to ground the Argument; ſince it extends to the Children as well as the Parents. For where the Reaſon is common to both, ſo muſt be the Privilege and the Practice. But the End or Reaſon why the Parents were to be baptized, was, to *receive the Gift of the Holy Ghoſt*. Of this Holy Ghoſt the Children had the Promiſe as well as they; therefore muſt they be baptized that they might receive the Promiſed Gift. Or thus; To the Benefit of Baptiſm, which is *Remiſſion of Sins*, or at leaſt *the Gift of the Holy Ghoſt*, the Children had an equal Right with their Parents and, conſequently, they muſt have an equal Right to Baptiſm. For he that has a Right to the End, or Benefit, has a Right to the

the Means whereby it is attained; and if he has not this Right, he had as good be without the other.

Very much additional Strength this Argument will receive, when we conſider who the Perſons were to to whom the Apoſtle addreſſes himſelf in thoſe Words. For *Jews* they were, who by the Laws of God and the conſtant Practice of their Church from *Abraham*'s Time to that very Hour, injoyed the Privilege of having their Infants admitted into the Church and Covenant; as likewiſe did the Proſelytes to them from the Gentiles. What then could People, who had thoſe Laws and that Uſage ſo deeply riveted in their Minds, underſtand by St. *Peter*'s Words, (which, in reſpect of Baptiſm and its Benefits, ſet them and their Children on even Ground) but that they were ſtill equally to injoy their ancient Privileges without Retrenchment? For his Addreſs is unlimitted; Be baptized every one of you, Men, Women and Children, for a Reaſon that is common to you all; *the Promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt* being made *to you and your Children*, and the Benefits of Baptiſm lying open to you and them, as thoſe of Circumciſion did. In what other Senſe than this could the *Jews* underſtand him? Would the Apoſtle then have talked after this unguarded manner in his divine Inſtructions, to People whoſe Tempers he knew to be wonderful tenacious of their old Rights and Cuſtoms, if of thoſe Rights their Children were now abridg'd? Had this been the Caſe, an Addreſs ſo exactly formed after the old Faſhion, and ſuited to their Laws, Uſages and Humours, had tended directly to caſt them and the Church of Chriſt into a Snare, and to eſtabliſh Error by a Rule, if my Judgment fails me not. Nor can it be ſuppoſed thoſe obſtinate *Jews* had been ſo very quiet, if they had ſeen their Children now to loſe their ancient Rights, and be quite diſprivileged, in caſe they had underſtood the Apoſtle otherwiſe.

Dr.

Dr. *Whitby* is pleaſed freely to give up this Place to the *Baptiſts*, "Becauſe, as he ſays, they are the "miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt that are here "meant, which Infants cannot have." But I am not yet inclined to reſign to his Judgment in this Matter. For St. *Peter* makes the Gift he ſpeaks of common to all Chriſtians throughout the World, and even to the World's End; inaſmuch as it belongs to all that are afar off, *even as many as the Lord our God ſhall call.* So the Gift is univerſal, extending to Chriſtians in all Places and in all Times; and this cannot be true of Miraculous Gifts, which ſeveral Chriſtians were without in the Apoſtolical Age itſelf, as the Doctor acknowledges, and which continued not for many Ages following, but gradually decreaſed, till at laſt they quite expired. What Neceſſity is there to underſtand the Place of Miraculous Gifts alone? Might not the Apoſtle under them comprehend thoſe that were ordinary? And muſt he not do ſo, if his Words were verified? He ſpoke indeed of extraordinary Gifts before, but his Diſcourſe received ſome Pauſe and Interruption by the Interlocution of the *Jews*; upon which he reaſſum'd it, to give a proper Anſwer to their Queſtion. Then might he accommodate his Diſcourſe to inform them of the ordinary Effects of Baptiſm, which would laſt ſo long as the World did.

Beſides, it is not likely he ſhould ingage to make them all equal with the Apoſtles, and other moſt eminent Diſciples, in Spiritual Gifts. Or if he had, it was not anſwered in the Event. And this might have ſhocked their Faith, and leſſened his Authority. For, when the Holy Ghoſt fell in an extraordinary manner on new Converts, we find it commonly noted in the Sacred Hiſtory. But no ſuch Thing is noted of thoſe 3000 converted *Jews* after Baptiſm, nor is it ſcarce credible of them all. But, as it were, in Contra-diſtinction to them, it is record-

ed of the Apoſtles, *that many Wonders and Signs were done by them*, *ver.* 43. Why were the late Converts omitted, if they had the like Gift of doing Wonders? Or if ſome very few of them might have the Gift, that was no general Incouragement to be baptized, nor half an Accompliſhment of the Apoſtle's Words. For ſuch Reaſons as theſe I muſt beg leave to diſſent from the Doctor's Opinion.

Weak and ſilly is this Objection of the *Baptiſts*; "The Promiſe is to all that are afar off, *even as* "*many as the Lord our God ſhall call.* But he can "call only Adult Perſons, who are capable of hear- "ing and obeying the Call, which Infants cannot "do. Therefore to the Adult alone belongs the "Promiſe, and they alone muſt be baptized." Poor Stuff indeed, and very falſe! For cannot God call by his Acts and Ordinances, as well as by his Words? How elſe did he formerly call the Infants of *Jews* and *Proſelytes* into his Covenant and the Society of his Church? He gave Command to bring them in, but the Infants themſelves could neither hear nor obey; therefore others did it for them. Even ſo may he call the Infants of Chriſtian Parents. But St. *Peter*'s Meaning is none of our Adverſaries. He tells the *Jews* there preſent; *The Promiſe is to you, and to your Children.* This comprehends them and their whole Progeny. Then he extends it farther to take in others; And not only to you who are here upon the Spot, and to your Off-ſpring after you; but even to all whom God ſhall call into his Church from remote Places, and in future Times, as he has done long before. They and their Children have the ſame Promiſe and the ſame Privilege, the Children being called in the Parents, as was imported in the Covenant unto *Abraham.* This makes it a Rule that is univerſal and perpetual.

"But it is farther urged, that by Children we "muſt not underſtand Infants, but Poſterity. For

"by

" by Children the Scripture uſually means People " of Age; as the Children of *Iſrael*, &c." I grant it, that we muſt not underſtand Infants alone, but they muſt ſtill be included in the Account. For in ſuch a Latitude as the Apoſtle there uſes, there is no Poſterity without Infants. So there were among the Children of *Iſrael*; and the ſame Senſe we muſt give to the Expreſſion here, by taking in the Parents with all their Children, or Poſterity. Then it is the ſame as Seed in the Covenant, the Holy privileged Seed, whom the Parents Faith intituled to the Covenant and its Seal, by God's Act of Grace. And ſo this Senſe is not at all to the Diſadvantage of our Cauſe; unleſs we ſhould deal with the Words, as Mr. *Gale* has dealt with the State of Infants in *Irenæus*.

This Holy Biſhop in a Place that is much conteſted, teaching, that Chriſt came to ſanctify and ſave People of every Age, who by him are born anew unto God, diſtributes them into their ſeveral Claſſes or Periods of Time; Infants, Little ones, Boys, Youths and Seniors: Than which way of Reckoning nothing could be more accurate to confine Infants to the ſtricteſt and propereſt Senſe. Hereupon Mr. *Gale*, as I think, to ſhew his Talent in Critical Learning, more than any thing elſe, gives a Stretch of Ten Years Space at leaſt unto Infancy, before the End of which Infants may believe, eſpecially through the Help of Mr. *Lock*'s Method of Education, and be baptized; and ſo triumphs over his trifling Adverſaries. If ſo, Infant-Baptiſm ſhould come into good Repute again, and we ought to be no longer diſcriminated by the Name of *Pædobaptiſts* and its Oppoſite.

But he that will underſtand *Irenæus* aright, muſt take Infancy in all its Parts, provided it muſt reach unto Ten Years ſpace. For as he means, that there is no Part of the other Periods of human Life where-

in People may not be ſanctified and ſaved by Regeneration in Chriſt; ſo neither is there any Part of that Period he allots to Infancy, in which they may not receive the ſame Benefits. Thus every Part of our Life is provided with a Remedy againſt the fatal Effects of *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion by the Application of Redeeming Grace, and needs not abide under the Pollution of Sin, and the Sentence of Death. And thus that Father's Senſe will be fully and truly repreſented, and his Period of Infancy run parallel with the reſt, when, otherwiſe, it would be defective and unequal. But Mr. *Gale* takes the Liberty to ſubdivide upon him, and canton his firſt Period into Parcels, contrary to his Intention; and then to pick out that Part of it for his own Purpoſe which he likes beſt, tho' it cannot be Fair Dealing with his Author, or his Readers.

Criticiſm, in itſelf, is a neceſſary and excellent Accompliſhment for a Scholar; but as it is uſed by Mr. *Gale*, and many others, ſometimes to cramp Words and Phraſes into the Narroweſt Limits, and ſometimes to ſtretch them beyond all Meaſure, it crucifies Authors, or ſerves them as *Procruſtes* did his Strangers, and will ſooner bring us into Sceptiſm, than ſettle our Faith and Right Notions of Things. *Irenæus* was a Plain Dealer and Honeſt Biſhop, that took Words in their common Acceptation, and affected not to go out of the Road. I believe, therefore, he meant by Infants, little Children under Four Years Old, or thereabout, as the World does, and as Dr. *Whitby* from *Euſtathius* and *Phavorinus* notes on *Matt.* xix. 13, 14. But he knew nothing of Mr. *Lock* and our *Engliſh* Laws, *&c.* Nor went to *Hippocrates* and ſome other Authors, for an odd and ſingular Notion of the Word. But to let this paſs, and return:

The *Baptiſts* lay hold on this Text; "And *they* "*that gladly received his Word, were baptized*; Acts

"ii.

" ii. 41. This seems to limit the Baptism to the " Adult, and exclude Infants who could not glad- " ly receive the Word." Yet is it not said there, that none others beside them that so received the Word, were baptized; but they were, and others might be. However, this does not in the least affect the Apostle's Doctrine, nor destroy the Rule he hath set the Church for extending the Privilege of Baptism to the Children or Posterity, including Infants, as well as to the Parents. This Rule will stand firm, though no Infants at all might be then and there baptized. For another Time would serve to do it, after the Parents left the Assembly and were returned Home. Strangers at *Jerusalem* they mostly were, and brought not their Infants into that Assembly; and if none were present in the Place, they could not be then baptized. And this we can prove by clearer Evidence than the *Baptists* do the the other.

For, if back we look into *ver.* 6, 7. there we read; *The Multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every Man heard them speak in his own Language; and they were all amazed and marvelled, saying, Behold, &c.* And *ver.* 12. *They were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?* Here is the Note of Universality, *All* Twice used to express the whole Company that were then present. Now they that could all judge of different Languages, that could wonder, be amazed, confounded, and ask such Questions, were all old enough to receive the Word with Gladness. Better Authority this is to shew no Infants were then present, than the *Baptists* is to shew there were none then baptized.

But to such Difficulties as this, I believe, a more just and solid Solution may be given. History briefly reciting human Transactions, takes express Notice of those whom the Lawyers call *Personæ Civiles*,

viles, or Perſons who are in a Legal Capacity of acting for themſelves. Minors and Perſons of the like State and Quality it paſſes over in Silence, unleſs there be ſome ſpecial Reaſon to mention them. Theſe are known to be comprehended under their reſpective Heads and Chiefs, who oblige them by their own Acts, and diſpoſe of them and their Fortunes according to their own Diſcretion. So the ſhort and general Narrative ſpecifies the Heads, who, as the Principal Springs and Wheels in a Machine, carry away their Dependents along with them in their own Motion. It is common in our publick Diſcourſes, to apply ourſelves to Men, when we would be underſtood of Women and Children too, that have the Uſe of Reaſon. And ſo the *Baptiſts* themſelves, in the Rules for the other Sacrament, will have Females comprized by the Figure *Syllepſis* under the Males. This Point muſt be further illuſtrated and juſtified in my next Argument. But according to this Account, and to the Cuſtom of God's Church about Converts, the Proſelytiſm and Baptiſm of little Children, comes in of Courſe, as an Acceſſion to thoſe of the Parents, and needs not be ſpecified in the Hiſtory.

An Inſtance for this may ſuffice at preſent; and it ſhall be in a Caſe of the ſame Nature with that which is now in Hand. In *Eſther* viii. 17. we read, *Many of the People of the Land became* Jews; *for the Fear of the* Jews *fell upon them*. Then their Male Infants were circumciſed, and the Females admitted *Proſelytes*, as well as the Parents. For ſo was God's Law and the Church's Practice. Yet mind the only Motive that made the Proſelytes. It was that of Fear, which could fall on none but Perſons of Choice and Diſcernment to provide for their own Security, not on Infants. Shall we then limit the Proſelytiſm and Circumciſion to Adult Perſons, becauſe they alone were capable of Fear,

the

the only Inducement that made the Converts, and debar Infants, becauſe uncapable? Neither muſt we for the like Reaſon debar them from Proſelytiſm and Baptiſm in St. *Luke*'s Narrative. For thoſe Infants could no more fear, than theſe could gladly receive the Word.

IV. If in the New-Teſtament Infants are called Chriſt's Diſciples, then are they proper Subjects of his Baptiſm. But ſo are they called *Acts* xv. 10. *Now therefore, why tempt ye God, to put a Yoke upon the Neck of the Diſciples, which neither our Fathers nor we were able to bear?* That theſe were Chriſt's Diſciples, neither is nor can be denied. The Yoke deſigned to be impoſed on them, was Circumciſion, in the *Jews* Senſe of a Bond obliging to keep the whole *Moſaical* Law in order to Salvation, as appears by comparing *ver.* 1, 5, 24. together. For they thought that Ordinance and the whole Law muſt continue in Force for ever. Every Male Diſciple of Jeſus Chriſt they conceived muſt be circumciſed, and thereby bound to keep the Law; and none but Diſciples; for profeſſed Infidels and their Children, had no Right. They themſelves and their Children being circumciſed already, the Deſign was level'd at the Gentile Converts, who then began to be numerous, and were daily increaſing, whereof ſome muſt have Male Infants. Theſe Infants therefore, thoſe Zealots for the Law would have *circumciſed after the Manner of* Moſes, *ver.* 1. and as their Law preſcribed, *Exod.* xii. 48. and alſo as their Church had always practiſed. For doubtleſs they would not break the Law and Cuſtom by circumciſing the Fathers, and leaving their Infants uncircumciſed. And ſo they would bring upon them all, the Unſupportable Yoke of Circumciſion to keep the Law, as was their Senſe of the Matter. Conſequently, if the Gentile Proſelytes had any Male Infants, or were like to have to the World's End; and

if thoſe Zealots for the Law were ſtrong for circumciſing all Male Proſelytes, with their Male Infants, but none others, then muſt thoſe Male Infants, of Neceſſity, be reckoned among Chriſt's Diſciples; which was the Thing to be demonſtrated. Then, if his Diſciples they were, they muſt be actually baptized, or had a preſent Right to be, according to his Law for diſcipling all Nations, *Matt.* xxviii. 19. and according to the conſtant Practice of the Church in thoſe Days, who never made a Diſciple, but they baptized him immediately.

Againſt this Mr. *Gale* argues; "Infants cannot be "meant nor comprehended there in the Word *Diſ-* "*ciples*, becauſe the Brethren on whom the At- "tempt was made, are ſaid to be taught, *ver.* 1. "that without being circumciſed, they could not "be ſaved. This can't include Infants." Strange News indeed! As if the Circumciſed *Jews* of Old were not taught in a Body to *love the Lord, and keep his Commandments*; and yet they had circumciſed Infants among them. And if after the Manner of *Moſes* they were taught to do it, that Manner is well known, that the Parents were taught to circumciſe their Infants.

But Mr. *Gale* goes on, *Let.* VIII. *p.* 295, 296. "The Affair related only to thoſe among the Gen- "tiles who were turned to God, according to St. "*James*'s Determination. And ſure, none will ſay, "Infants can turn from a Falſe Religion to God." Yes, we ſay they can, and moſt aſſuredly are turned, when their Parents, turning from their former Idolatries and Superſtitions, bring their Children along with them to God, and devote them to his Service, unleſs they be very careleſs of their Salvation. So it was in the Converſions of old, when they that turned to the *Jews*, turned their Infants alſo, and devoted them to the true God by Circumciſion, who were before devoted to Idols and Dæmons by Hea-

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theniſh Rites; of which we have enough in *Tertullian*, Lib. de Animâ, *Chap.* xxxix. Theſe were proper Proſelytiſms, Turnings or Converſions of Infants unto God. As Subjects, removing from one State, and naturalized in another, naturalize their Infants together with themſelves; and ſo both turn Subjects to the New State.

Mr. *Gale* proceeds with a Maſculine Courage; "The whole Scope of the Place, the Injunctions of "that venerable Council of the Apoſtles, their Let- "ter, all the Circumſtances, do very evidently "conſpire to ſhew their Conſultation related not "to Infants, but only to the Adult. Nay, St. *Pe-* "*ter*, in the Words immediately preceding the "Verſe our Author cites, ſays of the Perſons who "are the Subjects of the Diſpute, that God had pu- "rified their Hearts by Faith; from whence 'tis "plain, the Perſons he ſpoke of were actual Belie- "vers; and conſequently, by Ναθηλῶν, in the follow- "ing Words, the Holy Ghoſt intends only the Con- "verts, excluſively of their Infants, if they had "any." Having thus won the Field, he runs out againſt Prepoſſeſſions, Fallacies, &c. and appeals to the Country-man's Judgment for the true Meaning of the Word *Diſciple*; which I believe will fail him here, upon a little Inſtruction to that Country-man, and do better Service againſt his Notion of Infancy in *Irenæus*.

But not too faſt; we have a great deal yet to ſay for our ſelves, of which I ſhall give him the Heads, and promiſe to make them out, with Enlargments and Confirmations, if called upon. For,

1. What if by Faith in that Place be meant a Profeſſion of the Goſpel Doctrine and Religion, as it frequently ſignifies in the New Teſtament? May not Infants be dedicated, or give up their Names, to that Profeſſion by Baptiſm, as they did to the Worſhip of God by Circumciſion? It was by that

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Profeſſion the Hearts of the Gentile Converts were purified; and not by the ſingle Act of believing alone, which, in ſome ſenſe, the Devils have, *Jam.* ii. 19. Or, if the Grace and Habit of Faith be meant thereby, why may not Infants have that Grace, ſince the *Baptiſts* allow that they may be, and ſometimes are, regenerated by the Spirit? They have it not in the Act, but they have it in the Root and Principle, ſeeing the Spirit of God is the Principle, not only of Faith, but of all Graces whatſoever in Religion. Surely, the Operations of God's Spirit on their Souls in a New Birth, are not vain and idle, but leave ſome Impreſſions and Effects. So Infants have the Principle of Reaſon in them, though we ſee no more of its viſible Effects for ſome Time, than we ſee of the Grace of their Regeneration. In a Word, the Guilt of Original Sin being remitted, its Filth waſhed off, and they themſelves dedicated to the Faith and Religion of Chriſt by the Ordinance of Baptiſm and its Grace, their Hearts are then purified by Faith, in the Two Senſes here given.

2. And this Account is confirmed by the Words themſelves which St. *Peter* uſes: *God has put no Difference between us and the converted Gentiles, purifying their Hearts by Faith.* The Purification is wholly aſcribed unto God. It was not then their actual Faith did it; for though that is principally the Act of God by Grace, yet it is the Act of Men alſo in which they co-operate. But the Goſpel Religion, the Word of Faith, is the pure Gift of God, his ſole Act of Grace, to which human Endeavours have contributed nothing. When therefore, God inclined the Gentiles Hearts to embrace the Faith and Religion of Chriſt, and to bring their Children with them from the Service of Idols, to the Service of God, he purified the Hearts of both by Faith, or by the Profeſſion of the Goſpel of Faith. And if this be the True Account of the Place, as I take

take it to be, it removes the Main Rub and Difficulty out of our Way. For this is accommodated to the State of Infants, as well as the Parents.

But Mr. *Gale* seems to question, whether those Gentile Converts had any Infants; for he says, If they had any, what their Numbers were at that precise Time, we need not enquire. But surely such Converts would have Infants before the World's End; and upon them all those Judaizing Christians intended to lay the Yoke of Circumcision and the Law of *Moses*, because they thought them for ever obligatory. So this makes no Alteration in the Case. The rest of the Objection is very weak, and will be taken off with greater Ease. For,

3. Disciples are of Two Sorts, initial and incomplete, and those that are finished and more perfect. These last must have actual Faith and Obedience, in which Sense we do not pretend Infants can be Disciples. The others are so only by Profession, or at most by the Seeds and Principle of Grace in their New Birth, while they are separated from the profane World, and dedicated to the True Religion by God's Ordinance. This was the general Sense, in which not only the Adult *Jews*, but all their Infants, were God's Disciples, *Isa.* viii. 16. and bore the Characters of Saints, holy, faithful, elect, beloved, peculiar, *&c.* because they were all so by Profession, and were set apart and appropriated to God by the distinguishing Marks of *his People. Thus saith the Lord*, I *have separated you from other People, and ye shall be Holy unto me; for I the Lord am Holy, and have severed you from other People, that ye should be mine*, Lev. xx. 24, 26. And this is the current Language of the New Testament also, to describe Christ's Disciples, as Dr. *Whitby* and others have made appear. In this incomplete Notion, Infants are Christ's Disciples when baptized, and may bear the other Titles. So they are reckoned among

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the Species of Mankind, are Members of Families, and Subjects of a Commonwealth. Rights they have here, which, if invaded, the Law will vindicate, and do them Juſtice. But to the Service and Duties of Subjects they are not tied, except only to what may be done by Proxy.

Chriſt appropriates Infants to himſelf, when he commands they ſhould be brought unto him, and ſays, that *of ſuch is the Kingdom of Heaven.* And ſo he does little Children, when he declares; *Whoſo ſhall receive one ſuch little Child in my Name, receiveth me*, Matt. xviii. 5. To receive them in his Name imports, that he has a peculiar Right in, and Relation to them, as Perſons belonging to himſelf whom he particularly loves. So the Phraſe [*In his Name*] ſignifies in other Places. *Whoſoever ſhall give to drink unto one of thoſe little ones, a Cup of cold Water in the Name of a Diſciple, verily I ſay unto you, he ſhall in no wiſe loſe his Reward*, Chap. x. 42. Which is thus in St. *Mark* ix. 41. *Whoſoever ſhall give you to drink in my Name, becauſe ye belong to Chriſt.* Therefore, to receive little Children in his Name, is to receive them as his Diſciples. For if they had no ſpecial Relation to him as Diſciples and Members of his Body, why ſhould he take to himſelf the Kindneſſes that are ſhewed to ſuch little Children in his Name? Does he ever uſe ſuch indearing Language towards Heathens and Infidels that are out of his Church and Fold, and therefore out of his peculiar Care and Affection, while they ſo continue? Aliens and Strangers they are that belong not to him; yea, Enemies, *Rom.* v. 10. For it is only the Spiritual Relation of Fraternity and Brotherhood to him, that grounds ſuch Appropriations. *Verily I ſay unto you, Inaſmuch as ye have*, or have not, *done it unto one of the leaſt of theſe my Brethren, ye have*, or have not, *done it unto me*, Matt. xxv. 40, 45. To Chriſt therefore ſuch little Children do belong as his Bre-

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thren and Disciples. For, Believers also in him they are there called, *Matt.* xviii. 6. *Whoso shall offend one of these little Ones that believe in me.* Meaning it of, and probably pointing to, that very little Child he had then before him. Such a little One in Age, not only in Temper and Disposition: Such a little One as that was whom he made a Pattern to his Disciples, and proposed him as an Emblem of Humility and Conversion to all; whom he gave them Encouragement to receive in his Name; and whom he now says, that he and such like believed in him. So the Subject he speaks of was not varied.

4. As to the Injunctions, Letter, &c. of that venerable Council; To whom in Civil or Ecclesiastical Bodies, are such Acts directed, but to the most eminent Persons? To the Chiefs, Heads, Principals, or Governors, who, as the Body Representative, command and influence the rest, act in their Name, and determine them by their Acts? They all stand incorporated together, and the Acts of the Principals, are the Acts of the whole Body, while those that are under Government are not excluded, but always included in the general Accounts. And so the Disciples in that History of the *Acts*, were Believers, purified by Faith, &c. because the Heads and most eminent Members were so. Yet were Infants still of the Body, as in the *Jewish* Church. Were Mr. *Gale* to describe a Member of the Church of *England*, it is like he would say, He was one that held to *Episcopacy* as of Divine Right, served God by the *Establish'd Liturgy*, and so on. Surely, he would be a Wise Man that would conclude from thence, the Church of *England* acknowledged no Infants for its Members, because they know not what *Episcopacy* and *Liturgies* mean. In such Cases, Historians, studying Brevity while they relate Passages and Transactions, regard only the Principals or eminent Persons of the Body, and are not

bound

bound to be nice in their Diſtinctions and Definitions.

5. For this way of Reckoning there is good Reaſon, becauſe the Heads influence and over-rule the others. Parents diſpoſe of their Infants and little Children as they pleaſe, and bring them into their own Religion. And ſo they commonly do their Houſholds. *Abraham* commanded his Children and Houſhold to ſerve God, and by his Order they were circumciſed. *Joſhua* ingages, that his *Houſe ſhould ſerve the Lord*, *Joſh.* xxiv. 15. And in the Hiſtory of the Apoſtles *Acts*, the Converſions of the Heads converted the whole Families. Never were there any Parents that did not devote and dedicate their little Children to the Service of the God, or Gods, whom they themſelves worſhipped. Never ſince the Church of God was organized into a Regular Body, in *Abraham*'s Days to *Chriſt*'s, were Infants left out of the Church; and before that, we believe the little Children were always of their Fathers Religion, while in their Power. And never was there a Commonwealth of which Infants were not Members. Mr. *Gale* and his Party may, by their Sophiſtical Arguments, as well ſpurn Infants out of the Human Species, out of Families, and out of all Civil Communities, as out of the Church of God. For it is their Natural Right to be devoted to the Service of their Maker, as it is their Parents Duty to devote them.

How upon their Terms the *Baptiſts* will defend the Univerſality of the Chriſtian Church, is plainly unaccountable. The Fall in *Adam* was univerſal. So, by God's Deſign was Redemption, Grace and Salvation through Chriſt. And ſo was the Church of Chriſt intended to be, to which Salvation by God's Word and Covenant is now appropriated. Catholic, or Univerſal, it is in our Creeds, and in the *Baptiſts* too, *Article* 8. Then ſhould it extend to Perſons of all Ages, Sexes and Conditions. But if

Children,

Children, till they have actual Faith and Repentance, be excluded from the Church, without their Fault, how great a Part of Mankind are they? How by God's Word do they partake in Christ's Redemption and saving Grace? And how is his Holy Church Catholic and Universal? Is it not in this respect more limitted and particular than the *Hebrew* Church was from *Abraham* to *Christ?*

The Hints I have here given may lead the Reader into a Train of Thoughts upon this Subject, that are agreeable to the Nature of Things, to the Methods of God in modelling his Church, and to the Laws and common Customs of Mankind. If God has made it impossible for Infants to be Visible in the Church, it is impossible for the Visible Church to be Universal.

What more common in the later Parts of Scripture, than to call all the Ancient *Jews* by the Name of Fathers? Had they therefore no Females, Batchelors and Infants among them, by reason these cannot be properly called Fathers? Or did none of these go *under the Cloud, and pass through the Sea*, because they are all called Fathers that did so? 1 *Cor.* x. 1. Or did none of them eat of the *Manna* in the Desart, because they that did so are stiled Fathers, *John* vi. 31, 49.? And were none of old circumcised but Fathers properly so called with Apostles and Elders, because in this very controverted Text the Apostle says, *A Yoke which neither our Fathers nor we were able to bear?* Why are not Infants excluded from that Yoke, since they could not properly be Fathers, nor Apostles and Elders; as well as they are excluded from Discipleship, because they could not as properly as some others, be Believers, have their Hearts purified by Faith, receive Letters and Injunctions? What then is all this but to equivocate and play upon Words, to cast

a Miſt before our Eyes, and try if we cannot be bubbled out of Common Senſe?

V. Our next Proof for Infant-Baptiſm ſhall be grounded on 1 *Cor.* vii. 14. *The unbelieving Husband is ſanctified by the Wife, and the unbelieving Wife is ſanctified by the Husband; elſe were your Children unclean, but now are they holy.* The Conſtruction which Dr. *Hammond*, Mr. *Wall* and others have put upon this Text, I leave to thoſe that like it beſt; and ſhall follow my own Senſe, which has been the moſt common; becauſe I think it moſt agreeable to the Language and Tenor of the Scriptures. And I ſhall briefly give it thus:

The *Jewiſh* Converts retaining their old Prepoſſeſſions, thought themſelves bound by the Law of God to have no Inter-marriages with Infidels; and if marry they did with them, they thought Converſe and Cohabitation with them to be polluting. Then they knew that by the old Law unclean Perſons muſt for the Time be ſeparated from the Congregation. How then could they have conſtant Matrimonial Society with ſuch Conſorts, and not be defiled and excluded from the Chriſtian Aſſemblies? This was their Caſe, and the *Corinthians* wrote to St. *Paul* for a Reſolution of it.

He anſwers, That the Unbeliever, in the Account of Chriſtianity, was ſo far from polluting the Believer, that he was rather ſanctified by him, or in him. Elſe if the Believers became unclean by Cohabitation, and muſt be barred, like Heathens, from Religious Communion, their Children alſo would be counted unclean, but now they are holy. The Believer was holy by Profeſſion, the Unbeliever was only ſanctified for his Uſe by God's Account, or Act of Acceptance; as Meats are held ſanctified by the Word of God and Prayer, 1 *Tim.* iv. 5. This is no other than an external Quality of Holineſs and Sanctification, not internal or inherent. Grace follows

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the more favourable ſide, and gives the Believer the Advantage over the Infidel. So chiefly for the Believer's ſake, their common Children were Holy.

For this was an Affection which, by Virtue of God's Covenant, always accompanied profeſſed Believers, and their Children. A Holy Seed they were, *Nehem.* ix. 2. *Iſa.* vi. 13. and they and their Off-ſpring were the Bleſſed of the Lord for Ever, *Chap.* lxv. 23. And this Holineſs, with the like Privileges, ſtill accompanies Chriſtians, 1 *Pet.* ii. 9. 'Tis commonly called Federal, as depending on God's gracious Covenant; or Relative, becauſe of their Covenant Relation with God; or Radical, For *if the Root be holy, ſo are the Branches*, Rom. xi. 16.; or Seminal, becauſe it is the Native Prerogative of the Holy Seed. A Quality therefore that does not inwardly affect their Souls, but their outward State and Condition by God's Original Charter to *Abraham*. As in Corporations, he that is Born of a Freeman, is Free; ſo was St. *Paul* born a *Roman* Citizen, *Acts* xxii. 28. or Freeman of *Rome*.

And as they and their Children were counted holy; ſo Heathens and their uncircumciſed Off-ſpring were counted unclean, *Acts* x. 28. *Iſa.* xxxv. 8. and lii. 1. And in *Titus* i. 15. the *Defiled and Unbelieving* are linked together.

This, therefore, is the Current Language of the Holy Ghoſt, and our Interpretation is licenſed by Divine Authority. And thus we ground our Argument upon it for *Pædobaptiſm*.

To the Antient Patriarchal Church of God, we and our Children, as his Holy and Peculiar People, ſucceed in all their Spiritual Privileges. Therefore muſt we have the ſame Treatment. A Federal Holineſs they had by Intail for ever, and that intitled them and their Infants to the Covenanting Ordinance; that admitted them into the Church and Society of the Faithful. Upon the ſame Foot and Le-

vel exactly, do the Infants of Chriſtian Parents ſtand with theirs. A Federal Holineſs they ſtill have, as theirs had; therefore have they the ſame Title to the Covenanting Ordinance, and to ſolemn Admiſſion into the Church. For the Gift and Calling of God are without Repentance. And the Rule is good, *Paria paribus conveniunt.* They that are upon equal Ground, muſt have equal Uſage in Point of Privilege. The ſame Badge and Character of Holineſs they now wear as they did of old; and when we preſent and dedicate them unto God with this Stamp of the Holy Seed, we believe he will kindly receive them, and acknowledge his own Mark and Impreſſion.

The Conſequence is ſound and rational, and runs parallel with another that the *Jews* drew in a Caſe not much unlike, and it was approved: The Law ſaid, *Every Male that openeth the Womb ſhall be Holy unto the Lord.* But it no where commanded it ſhould be brought to the Temple, and there be preſented unto God. Yet that Inference the *Jews* made; ſo was their Practice, and ſo was Chriſt preſented in Approbation of it, *Luke* ii. 22, 23. Therefore ſuch Inferences in poſitive Rights, are not weak and unlawful.

Vain then is their Objection who ſay, "It is not "Holineſs that gives a Right to Baptiſm, but "God's Command and Precept." For it is a Sound Inference from, and Practice upon his old Command to *Abraham.* And it is a Claim of Privilege wherein he inveſted the Holy Seed for Ever.

Others wiſely obſerve, that if ſuch a Holineſs intitles the Children to Baptiſm, it will as well intitle the Unbelieving Parents to it, becauſe they alſo are ſanctified. Right, if they can prove them deſcended from the Holy Line; and married Perſons, who have Children of their own, to be Infants in Age. Otherwiſe they ought to know our Doctrine

and

and Practice about the Adult. Mr. *Gale*'s Extent of Infancy to 21 Years by the *Engliſh* Laws, may do, but his 10 or 14 Years hardly will.

Let. XIII. *p* 515. he preſſes our Notion with Abſurdity, and making St. *Paul* to utter a Falſhood. "For, ſays he, the only Reaſon why Infants are to "be admitted to Baptiſm, St. *Paul* ſays, according "to the *Pædobaptiſts*, is, that one of the Parents is "Chriſtian; but if ſo, then all others, tho' brought "to be baptized by ever ſo good Sureties, are not "to be admitted, for they are unclean. This, he "ſays, is contrary to God's infinite Goodneſs and "Juſtice, to the Hypotheſis of the moſt judicious "*Pædobaptiſts*, to the *Jewiſh* Diſpenſation and Prac-"tice, and limits the Grace of Chriſt to narrower "Bounds."

In all which Paragraph there is much to ſurprize us, but nothing to puzzle or perplex us. For, do we not plainly lay the Grounds of admitting Infants into the Church by Baptiſm, as God laid them to *Abraham* by Circumciſion? Was not this Grace and Privilege thereby limitted to the Children of Believers? Or was there any Proviſion made for circumciſing the Infants of Profeſſed Infidels? One of the Parents, at leaſt, muſt become a Proſelyte before his Male-Infants were circumciſed; and I think he muſt be the Father; for *Timothy* was uncircumciſed in his Infancy, becauſe his Father was a *Greek*, though his Mother was a *Jeweſs*. Unclean they were all, while they continued Heathens; and ſo neither Parents nor Infants were circumciſed. Clean they became upon Converſion, and ſo they and theirs were circumciſed. Unclean are Infidels, ſays St. *Paul*, and therefore not to be baptized; but if both or one Parent turn Chriſtian, he and his Infant Children are Clean or Holy, and ſo to be baptized. And what more parallel than this in the

Two Diſpenſations? Or did God's Law make any other Proviſion?

The *Jews*, without any Rule, went farther: For if they found a Heathen Infant expoſed, or took him in War, they circumciſed and baptized him too, and brought him up in their own Religion. And ſo, according to the moſt judicious *Pædobaptiſts*, may Chriſtians baptize him; for the Faith and Act of the Sureties that preſent him, and ingage for his Education, and ſo become his ſpiritual Parents, are ſomething equivalent to the Prerogative of a Holy Birth in the Seed of *Abraham*. But wherefore ſhould thoſe Gentlemen talk of limitting the Grace of Chriſt, and our acting contrary to the Goodneſs and Juſtice of God, in not admiting the Infants of Infidels unto Baptiſm, when they themſelves will admit unto it never an Infant of Infidel or Believer? And if they ſay, God's Grace is common to Infidels with Believers, or that ſuch a Limitation of it, as as they ſpeak of, is inconſiſtent with God's Goodneſs and Juſtice, do they not talk in the Language of a *Deiſt*?

Mr. *Stennett* againſt *Ruſſen* ſays; "I find not that "the Apoſtle determines his Words to Infants, any "more than to Adult Children; therefore if the In- "fants, one of whoſe Parents was a Believer, were "Church-Members, which Mr. *Ruſſen* ſuppoſes "meant by the Word [Holy] all Adult Children "may be ſuppoſed to have been Church-Members "too, as ſoon as one of their Parents became a Be- "liever."

But it does not follow; for to Infants it was the Privilege of their Birth among the *Jews*; and owing to their Parents Converſion among Proſelytes. But the Adult Children of theſe Proſelytes muſt have the ſame perſonal Qualifications with their Parents, before they could be admitted into Church Communion with the *Jews*. And St. *Paul* underſtanding the

the Laws and Customs of his Country, must in this Matter speak agreeably to them.

Also in the next Page, which is 248. he adds; "Seeing the Unbelieving Parent is said to be sanctified by the Believer, the Holiness of the Children "must be derived as well from the Sanctification "of the unbelieving Parent, as that of the Believer; "and therefore must regard the Lawfulness of their "Conjugal Relation. Whereupon he concludes, "that the Sanctity of the Children may well be understood of their Legitimacy. And Mr. *Gale* "chimes in with him;" *Let.* XIII. *p.* 516.

This Notion of Conjugal and Legitimate Holiness, shall be examined presently. But suppose what is said before is true, though I grant it not; that the Childrens Holiness derives as well from the Unbelieving, as the Believing Parent; yet all the Sanctification that the Unbeliever had, was from the Believer, or for his sake, and upon his Account. Whatever Holiness, therefore, the Unbeliever transferred unto the Children, it was the Believer's originally, and to his Account it must all be placed; which is as much as needs be said to that Article.

But the quaint Notions of a Matrimonial and Legitimate Holiness, and of a Spurious or Bastard Uncleanness, shall in few Words be quite exploded out of Doors.

For if the Lawfulness of the Marriage and Cohabitation, sanctifies the State, and the Lawful Issue, then were all Heathens duly married, and their Issue sanctified. For, who can deny that their Marriages and Cohabitation were lawful? If so, almost all the Heathen World is sanctified. This Notion, therefore, proves nothing, because it proves abundantly too much, and runs the Abettors into a gross Absurdity. Neither can these Notions ever be supported by the Authority of the Sacred Writers, nor of the Profane either, as I am perswaded.

1. For the Matrimonial or Conjugal Holineſs, the only Pretences I can find alledged, are 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 4. where Chaſtity is called *Sanctification and Honour*; and *Heb.* xiii. 4. where *Marriage* is ſaid to be honourable. But is Chaſtity Matrimony, or Honour Sanctity? Do they not to all Mens Minds, that know any Diſtinctions between Things and Things, preſent very different Ideas from one another? He that knows not this, had need go to Mr. *Lock*'s Book of *Human Underſtanding*, as well as to his *Methods of Education*. But is not Matrimony a State of Chaſtity? Yes, in itſelf; but in the Uſe it may, and it may not be ſo. So are Celibacy, Widdower-ſhip, and all lawful States of Life. Therefore Matrimony, in this reſpect, founds no Privilege. But is it not a Remedy againſt Fornication and Uncleanneſs? Yes, and yet may not be Chaſtity in its proper Notion. For ſo is Phyſic a Remedy againſt Sickneſs, and yet Phyſic is not properly Health.

Yet I grant that Matrimony is a Holy Ordinance, as it was inſtituted by God in Paradiſe, during the State of Man's Innocency, and as it repreſents the Myſtical Union between Chriſt and his Church. But what Claims have lapſed Infidels in behalf of their Marriages from a Paradiſiacal State of Innocence, and from the Myſtical Repreſentations of the Chriſtian Church? Theſe are nothing to them, and they muſt, in ſpite of their Hearts, go without the Holineſs, as well as the Grace and Salvation, which their good Friends, the *Antipædobaptiſts*, have ſupplied them with.

2. For the Holineſs of Legitimacy in the Children, the Evidence is as much or more deplorably bad. What neceſſary Connexion is there between Holy and Lawful? And how many Things are the Laſt which are not the Firſt? As well may Children be called Wiſe, Strong, Learned, *&c.* as

Holy,

Holy, only becauſe they are Legitimate. However, Mr. *Stennett*, and ſome others, take their Foundation from *Mal.* ii. 15. where he ſays, the Prophet is ſpeaking againſt Polygamy, where he ſpeaks indeed againſt Divorces. But to paſs this by, the Prophet's Words are theſe; For *did not he make One? Yet had he the Reſidue of the Spirit. And wherefore One? That he might ſeek a Godly Seed.* Which obſcure Place muſt refer, either to God's making *Adam* and *Eve* one, by Matrimony in Paradiſe, or elſe to his making *Abraham* one, as the Stem of the Church, and Root of the Holy Seed and Branches. But what is either of theſe to the Marriages and Seed of Unbelievers? Can they pretend an Intereſt in Holineſs from Paradiſe or the Church of God in *Abraham*'s Family, when they are Sinners of the Gentiles, out of the Church, and out of the Covenant? Spurious therefore and Illegitimate is this Account of a Legitimate Holineſs in the Children of Heathens.

3. As deſtitute and abandoned of all good Support, is the Baſtard Uncleanneſs which next follows. For how come Baſe-born Children to be unclean? Do they contract it upon themſelves by any Act of their own? Are they acceſſary to their Parents Sin? Or can it be tranſmitted into their Souls by Propagation? Where has God eſtabliſhed this Law for Infants, as we believe was done in *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion? The Parents Uncleanneſs is a Moral Impurity, and if into their illegitimate Iſſue they can tranſmit any Uncleanneſs, it muſt be ſuch as they themſelves have, and are guilty of, when they beget them. This, I ſuppoſe, will not be affirmed; elſe the Children may be charged with all the Immoralities of their immediate Parents, which by this account will deſcend from Generation to Generation. Yet the *Baptiſts* themſelves allow, that *Pharez*, *Zarah*, *Jephthah*, and many others of an illegitimate

Birth, were holy Perſons, and within the Covenant. Therefore Baſtardy is not Uncleanneſs in a Moral Senſe, nor was it ever ſo reputed in a Legal.

Some roundly aſſert, it is called Uncleanneſs *Deut.* xxiii. 2. but very falſly; for what we there read is this: *A Baſtard ſhall not enter into the Congregation of the Lord: even to his Tenth Generation* (i. e. for ever, *Neh.* xiii. 1.) *ſhall he not enter into the Congregation of the Lord.* If Uncleanneſs was the Reaſon of his Excluſion, then all the Poſterity of a Baſtard muſt be unclean for ever; becauſe his Excluſion for that Reaſon is for ever. But the Word Baſtard is not there to be underſtood in our common Senſe, provided we may rely on Mr. *Selden*'s Judgment; who ſays, that *Mamzer*, which we render Baſtard, is one born of any ſuch inceſtuous Mixtures as the Law forbad, except only of a Woman in her Uncleanneſs, *De Jure Nat.* &c. *l.* 5. *c.* 16. And of entring into the Congregation of the Lord, *Simeon de Muis* gives this Conſtruction; That ſuch a one ſhall not be admitted for ever to the Political or Eccleſiaſtical Government, nor, by Marriage with a *Jeweſs*, obtain the Privileges of a *Jew*. And with this Opinion *Munſter*, *Fagius*, *Grotius*, and others, do in part accord.

But were it ſo, that the World Baſtard ſhould be taken in the common Senſe, and that to enter into the Congregation, is to injoy Church Communion in the ordinary Meaning of the Phraſe; yet Uncleanneſs is not ſpecified in the Text as the Reaſon that debarred him of that Privilege, nor need it at all be underſtood. For the Law laid hold on corporal Defects and Blemiſhes for that End, *ver.* 1. and of pure Unkindneſs to God's People, *ver.* 3. Then bare Illegitimacy of Birth is as good a Reaſon as thoſe Blemiſhes for that Excluſion. So nothing can be collected to favour that Spurious Uncleanneſs from this Scripture.

To

To help out at a dead Lift, Mr. *Stennett* ſays, " That the *Jews* who broke the Law of God in " marrying Idolatrous Wives, were ordered by " the Prophet *Ezra* to put away thoſe Wives, and " ſuch as were born of them, as unclean. " *Ezra* x. 2. 3. But does the Text call thoſe Children unclean? Or does it aſſign That as the Reaſon why they were put away? No, it is only Mr. *Stennet*'s own Gloſs, and no-body's beſide, that I know of, except *Junius* and *Tremellius*, who ſay, thoſe Births were impure by Law, though they neither do nor can produce the Law. Indeed both Wives and Children were put away as Illegal, not as Unclean; unleſs we underſtand by Uncleanneſs, their Idolatries and Superſtitions, which belong'd to them as Heathens, and is nothing to the preſent Purpoſe. Whereupon *Grotius* has this Comment: " The Sons are here commanded to follow the " Mother, as is the Cuſtom in unlawful Mar- " riages; this Cauſe alſo ſupervening, leſt being " educated in Superſtitions they ſhould corrupt " their Children. " And ſo ſtill there is nothing of an illegitimate Uncleanneſs here mentioned or ſuppoſed. Therefore the *Baptiſts* Accounts of theſe Matters, are all unſcriptural and unwarrantable.

VI. On *Feb.* 4. 1717. I had a private Conference with one Mr. *William Wood*, a *Baptiſt* Teacher in theſe Parts, when an Argument was managed between me and him, with his Aſſociates, to this Effect.

Owen. We read in 1 *Cor.* x. 1, 2. *All our Fathers, i. e.* all the Children of *Iſrael, were under the Cloud, and all paſſed through the Sea: And were all baptized unto* Moſes *in the Cloud and in the Sea.* Among them were Infants or little Children, *Exod.* x. 10. All theſe, as well as the Parents, *were baptized unto* Moſes *in the Cloud and in the Sea*; and ſo became his Diſciples.

ciples. Then, *ver.* 11. it is ſaid, *Now all theſe Things happened to them for Enſamples, and are written for our Admonition, upon whom the Ends of the World are come.* Therefore we are bound to receive the Admonition, and follow our Enſamples, by baptizing our Infants unto Chriſt, and making them his Diſciples, as thoſe Infants by Baptiſm were made Diſciples unto *Moſes*.

Wood. Were the Children of *Iſrael* made Diſciples to *Moſes* by that Baptiſm?

Owen. Yes, they were made his Diſciples, as he was God's Prophet Extraordinary, to declare his Laws unto his People. Therefore it is ſaid, *Exod.* xiv. 31. *They believed the Lord, and his Servant* Moſes.

Wood. It does not appear there was any Water in that Cloud.

Owen. But there was enough in the Sea, to plunge them over Head and Ears, if that had been neceſſary. And, perhaps, the ſtrong Wind raiſing the Water into the Air, might ſprinkle them all therewith in their Paſſage through the Sea. Whence it may be prov'd, that Baptiſm does not neceſſarily imply Dipping, were we now diſputing on that Subject: becauſe here was a Baptiſm without Dipping, though there wanted not Plenty of Water for the Purpoſe. [Something was replyed to this laſt Clauſe, but what it was I do not remember, nor does it affect the preſent Argument.]

Wood. That Baptiſm in the Cloud and in the Sea, was Metaphorical.

Owen. Suppoſe it was Metaphorical, *i. e.* improper, figurative, or typical, yet the Figure muſt be fulfill'd in the Truth, and the Type in the Antitype. Therefore, as the *Jews* Infants were baptiz'd in the Type and Figure unto *Moſes*, ſo muſt ours be baptiz'd in the Antitype and Truth unto

unto *Christ Jesus*; else we come not up to our Exemplars. The Types and Figures of the Old Testament were but Shadows; the Gospel Truth is the Substance; and the Shades are not of the same Kind with the Substance, nor the Types equal in Dignity with the Antitypes. A Resemblance and Similitude between both is sufficient.

Wood. And were all the mixt Multitude that came up with *Israel* out of *Ægypt*, baptiz'd unto *Moses* in the Cloud and in the Sea, and made his Disciples?

Owen. Yes; for they were convinced, by the Signs and Wonders they saw in *Ægypt*, that the God of the *Jews* was the true God, and their Religion the true Religion; they were therefore encourag'd to follow their Camp. And at the *Red Sea* they also believed the Lord, and his Servant *Moses*. Nor is it otherwise credible, that God would lead a Multitude of professed Infidels and Idolators with his People to partake in their Fortunes. Besides, they were the Strangers God made a Covenant with in the Land of *Moab*, together with the *Jews*, *Deut.* xxix. 11.

Wood. You may as well argue from hence, that Infants should be received to the Lord's Supper. For the Apostle adds, *ver.* 3, 4. *And they did all eat the same Spiritual Meat, and did all drink the same Spiritual Drink; for they drank of that Spiritual Rock that followed them.*

Owen. That Spiritual Meat and Rock was Christ; and when you can prove Christ to be the same with his Supper, and justify the Popish Doctrine of Transubstantiation; I will grant your Consequence to be good.

Mercer. (Another *Baptist* Teacher) But Christ is called the Passover.

Owen. True; but he is not call'd his Supper, nor his Supper the Passover. He is call'd the Passover in

in relation to the Paſchal Lamb of the *Jews*, which typified his Sacrifice, but did not typify his Supper, nor had any direct Relation to it. Therefore we read, *Chriſt our Paſſover is ſacrificed for us.*

Smith. (Another of the ſame Profeſſion) Will you prove Infant Baptiſm by Types and Figures? (This he urg'd twice or thrice).

Owen. Yes, that I will by any Scripture Arguments; eſpecially when thoſe Types and Figures are applied to my Uſe by the Holy Ghoſt, made my Enſamples, and I am admoniſh'd to follow them, and fulfil them. Did not St. *Paul* in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, from the Types and Figures of the Law, prove the Prieſthood and Sacrifice of our bleſſed Saviour, which are of greater Importance than Baptiſm?

Wood. The *Jews* are afterwards ſaid by the Apoſtle to be guilty of many wicked Things; and muſt we follow them as Enſamples in thoſe wicked Things?

Owen. O Mr. *Wood!* you ſhall not catch me at that Lock; for there are Enſamples to be avoided, as well as follow'd. The good we muſt follow, and avoid the bad; and among the good was the Children of *Iſrael*'s being *baptiz'd unto* Moſes *in the Cloud and in the Sea.*

Smith. You inſiſt on the Word All; then were all the Beaſts baptiz'd too?

Owen. That Gentleman ſeems to underſtand the Scripture juſt as St. *Francis* of *Aſſiſe* did, who finding there this Precept, *Go, preach the Goſpel to every Creature*, went and preach'd it to the Magpies, becauſe they were Creatures.

This Story I took by Tradition, and whether it was St. *Francis*, or St. *Anthony* of *Padua*, or neither, I am not reſponſible; but it was the fitteſt Anſwer I could give to Folly; and it put the Company to Laughter, and the Gentleman to the Con-

Confusion of a Blush, though he appear'd to have an excellent Frontispiece of his own.

There this Argument ended, and who had the best on it I submit to Judgment. My Antagonist Mr. *Wood* told me since, he had seen this Account, and had nothing to object against its Truth. Only he had something more to say to the Argument; which, by his Intimations, I take to be what I shall now observe.

For I have a little wondred with my self, that they did not at all except against my Sense of the Word *Fathers*, when I made it to signify and comprehend all the Children of *Israel*, or the whole collective Body of the *Jews*. For Infants, surely, could not be call'd Fathers, therefore they were not included in that Baptism. If so, then Females, Batchelors, and all that had no Children, could not be included for the same Reason. But to clear this seeming Difficulty;

1. This Phrase, All our Fathers, must bear a Sense that will comprehend all the Persons to whom the Actions or Incidents there mention'd, did belong. True it is of Men, Women and Children, *that they were all under the Cloud, and all passed through the Sea*; that they did *all eat of the same Spiritual Meat, and all drank of that Spiritual Drink.* Therefore *were they all baptiz'd unto* Moses *in the Cloud and in the Sea.* And in that Latitude must the Word *Fathers* be understood, since there is no Restriction used here, as in another Case is done; *ver.* 5. So the Baptism being express'd with a Note of Universality, extended to every living Soul in *Israel*, as the other Actions did. And to call them *Fathers*, is but a compendious Way of Reckoning, very usual in the Scriptures, to express the whole Body under the Names of the most dignified.

2. Doubt-

2. Doubtleſs the Apoſtle by *Fathers*, means the very ſame Perſons the Inſpired Writers of the Old Teſtament meant, when they related the ſame Paſſage in the Hiſtorical Account of it. And they ſpeaking thereof, call the Perſons therein concerned, ſometimes *Fathers*, as in *Pſal.* lxxviii. 12, 13. and ſometimes, *The Children of* Iſrael, as in *Exod.* xiv. 22. and *Numb.* ix. 17, *&c.* which ſhews thoſe Two Expreſſions, in this Account, to be equipollent.

3. *Fathers*, and *our Fathers* they are called, not in a Natural, but a Spiritual Senſe. In a Natural Senſe, *Fathers* they could not be termed to all the Church at *Corinth*; among whom were many Gentile Converts, who deſcended not of *Jewiſh* Parentage. *Fathers* then they were in a Spiritual Relation, becauſe the *Iſraelites* were all together the Ancient Church and People of God, profeſſing his Religion, and admitted into his Covenant. So they were our Anceſtors, Predeceſſors and Fore-runners in the Faith and Worſhip of the True God, which they handed down to their late Poſterity, and to the Church of Chriſt. From the whole Body of them have we received the Benefit, and are equally beholden for it to Old and Young, Males and Females; becauſe they profeſſed the Faith and True Religion of God before us, and tranſmitted it down into our Hands. Wherefore, *Fathers* is but a Name of Dignity and Reverence, to expreſs our Seniors or Predeceſſors in the Faith; and it comprehends all the Holy Seed and Spiritual Children of God, begotten before us in the Church. Thus Commentators underſtand it in the Text, and it is the Common Acceptation of the Word in Scripture, to denote the Ancient Church and Nation of the *Jews*. Any one may be ſatisfied of it, that will but peruſe *Pſal.* lxxviii. and cvi. *John* vi. *Acts* vii. beſide other Scriptures, where the Word frequently occurrs in this Senſe.

If

If it be objected, that Baptism is but a Rite or Ceremony; and to fore-shadow Ceremonies, there could be no Types and Figures. I answer, St. *Peter* was not of this Mind, when he makes the Waters of *Noah*'s Flood to fore-shadow Baptism, as the Type the Antitype, 1 *Pet.* iii. 20, 21. The Waters in both did correspond, and so may our Baptism with that of the *Jews* in the Cloud and in the Sea.

The Scriptural Evidences I thought fit to produce for Infant-Baptism, are now finished; and if any one of them does prove unanswerable, that alone is sufficient, and as good as an Hundred. Moreover, the Scriptures being God's infallible Word, cannot contradict themselves, by making that unlawful in one Place, which they make lawful and dutiful in another. Consequently, the Places cited out of them to disprove Infant-Baptism, must of Necessity have a different Sense and Construction from what our Adversaries put on them, provided our Arguments for it be good and valid.

THE

THE LAWFULNESS OF Infant-BAPTISM, Proved from *SCRIPTURE.*

PART III.

WHAT remains of my Task unperformed, is, to take off the *Baptists* Arguments and Objections from Scripture against Infant Baptism. Strong and plain they ought to be, before they can overthrow our Evidences for it, and by destroying an ancient Divine Charter, dispossess so many Infants of the great Privileges they injoyed ever since God preached the Gospel unto *Abraham*, and made them Citizens with his Saints, by the Evangelical Covenant. Clear and uncontestable was their Investiture, long and uninterrupted their Possession; and Disfranchisement being a Hardship, and Odious Case, should be no less plain and indisputable; else, the Favourable side should be chosen. Not by Consequences, but by expres Com-

Command, they came at first into that Noble Corporation the City of God, and there maintained their Claim and Right; nor should it be by Consequences, but by express Command, that they should now appear excluded. And yet Consequences are all that is urged against their Right. There are Three or Four Texts to this Purpose to be examined, and I think in answering them, I shall enervate the whole Strength of our Adversaries Cause.

1. I shall take into Consideration St. *Peter*'s Words, 1 *Epist.* iii. 21. *The like Figure whereunto even Baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away the Filth of the Flesh, but the Answer of a good Conscience toward God) by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.* "These Words of St. *Peter*, says Mr. *Gale*, "Let. XI. *p.* 416, 417. are an impregnable For-"tress of *Antipædobaptism*; and all the Attempts of "our Adversaries against them hitherto, have been "unsuccessful, and will probably ever be so. Dr. "*Hammond* trifles upon them most egregiously, "*&c.*" The Expressions of this Gentleman are commonly very terrible, and his Positions decretory. But I am by this Time so well acquainted with his Style and Management, that I am not at all startled with his big Words and bold Asseverations. For where I see the most Flashing, there I find the least Execution. If his Fortress be really impregnable, why does he say, our Attempts against it will be but probably for ever unsuccessful? Lie down we must before it, and despair; because impregnable Forts can never possibly be stormed and taken. But before I lay close Siege to his Bulwark, I have an Account to make up with him for an Expression he has dropped about the Type of this Baptism.

Some Crotchet or other poſſeſſed Sir *N. Knatchbul*'s Head to make *Noah*'s Ark, and not the Waters of the Floud, to be the Type of St. *Peter*'s Baptiſm. As others of his Party have done, ſo Mr. *Gale* falls in with Sir *Norton*; "The Apoſtle *Peter* makes "our Baptiſm to be the Antitype of the Ark, *Let.* "X. *p.* 372." The Ark then muſt be the Type. By this I perceive that if one great Man ſtarts a Notion, though ever ſo falſe and abſurd, other great Men and Critics will run away with it unexamined; eſpecially if it can make for the Intereſt of their Cauſe. But where then is the apparent Reſemblance between the Ark and Baptiſm, that ought to be between the Type and the Antitype? An Ark is an odd Figure to repreſent an Ordinance. And to maintain the Correſpondence between them, are they the Perſons, and not rather the Houſes and Churches wherein Chriſtians are, that ought to be dipped in Water and baptized? For the Ark it was that was properly in the Water, and that was a fitter Figure to repreſent material Buildings, than human Perſons.

But why ſhould not ſuch Learned Men as Sir, *Norton* and Mr. *Gale* conſult the Original, before they venture their ridiculous Notions into the World? For St. *Peter* in the very beginning of the Verſe has the Relative Article ᾧ, which is in the Neuter Gender, and by the Rules of Grammar can by no means agree with κιβωτὸς, the Ark, which is of the Feminine; but with ὕδατος, the Water, immediately aforegoing, which is of the ſame Gender with ᾧ. To the Water therefore Baptiſm muſt be the Antitype, and not to the Ark, unleſs they will fix a groſs Solœciſm upon St. *Peter*, as they endeavour to do a blundring Notion on the World. But that Affront they cannot poſſibly paſs upon the Apoſtle, becauſe he underſtood his Rules, as appears by his joyn-

joyning a Participle of the Right Gender with the Ark, in the Verſe before.

Here then the Correſpondence will eaſily appear. For, the Waters of *Noah*'s Flood drowning that ſinful Age, as the *Red Sea* afterwards did the *Egyptians*, bore up the Ark upon their Surface; which fitly repreſented the Church Militant toſs'd about in the Waves of this troubleſome World, but always ſaved by the Hand of Providence. *Noah*'s Entrance with his Family into the Ark, upon the Riſing of the Waters, repreſented our Entrance by Baptiſmal Water into the Church, in which Salvation is to be found. And if, as Waters are uſed to cleanſe, they farther ſignified the Purification of our Souls from Sin by Sacramental Grace, the Account of our Baptiſm, as a ſaving Ordinance, will be fully compleated in the Figure.

Having diſpatched this Reckoning with Mr. *Gale*, I come to attack his main Fort. The Strength of it lies in this; That it is not the waſhing with Water, but the Anſwer of a good Conſcience towards God; that is, St. *Peter*'s Saving Baptiſm. This Anſwer, Infants can never have in their Infant-State, wherein we baptize them; therefore, they ſhould not be baptized. And then, to give them a Baptiſm that is not Saving, is vain. Dr. *Whitby*, by a true and judicious Obſervation, lay acroſs his Way, and him he tries to remove. In Anſwer to it, the Doctor obſerves on the Place; "St. *Paul* alſo ſaith, That the true Circumciſion "before God, is not the outward Circumciſion of "the Fleſh, but the inward Circumciſion of the "Heart and Spirit, *Rom.* ii. 29. But will any "one hence argue, That the *Jewiſh* Infants, for "want of this, were not to be admitted into Covenant with God by Circumciſion? And yet the "Argument is plainly parallel." And ſo he goes on to demonſtrate it.

How does Mr. *Gale* go about to overthrow this? I muſt beg leave to tell him, 'tis by facing us down with two Untruths, in plain Defiance and Contradiction to St. *Paul*. And, firſt, he is of Opinion, "the Caſes are not at all parallel. For the Bap- "tiſm which ſaves, is expreſly deſcribed and li- "mitted to be, 1. Not the putting away the Filth "of the Fleſh: But, 2. The Anſwer of a good Con- "ſcience. Whereas St. *Paul*'s Words do not im- "port, that the only Circumciſion which ſaved "was, 1. Not the Circumciſion of the Fleſh: But, "2. The Circumciſion of the Heart and Spirit." Does he not, indeed? Let us hear him ſpeak in his own Terms; *Rom.* ii. 28, 29. *Circumciſion is not that which is outward in the Fleſh —— But Circumciſion is that of the Heart, in the Spirit.* Is not this parallel to St. *Peter*'s Words? Let any Man compare both Places, and be Judge. Nay, are not St. *Paul*'s Words the ſtrongeſt of the two? For St. *Peter* does not ſay, That the waſhing with Water is no Baptiſm at all, but only that it is not the Saving Baptiſm. Whereas if we interpret St. *Paul*'s Words in Mr. *Gale*'s rigid Way, he ſays, the Circumciſion of the Fleſh, is not Circumciſion; no Circumciſion at all, much leſs ſaving. Strange it is, that in the Patrons of Error, Aſſurance ſhould arrive to ſuch a Height! But, this being ſuch a groſs and palpable Untruth, he ſeems to miſtruſt it by an *However*, and flees to another Refuge.

"For St. *Paul* does not ſpeak of Circumciſion "while it continued in Force, but as quite abo- "liſhed under the Goſpel." Then, indeed, the outward Circumciſion availed nothing, but the inward. But this is no truer than the other. For againſt whom does St. *Paul* there diſpute? Does not the whole Chapter manifeſtly ſhew, it was againſt the unconverted *Jews*, who thought the outward Circumciſion was ſtill in Force? Then he argues

gues againſt them upon that Suppoſition, and ſtrives to convince them upon Principles that were always true in their own Religion. That this is true, appears undeniably from *ver.* 25. *Circumciſion verily profiteth, if thou keep the Law.* Now, I deſire to know of Mr. *Gale*, how Circumciſion, or any thing elſe, can verily profit, when it is clean aboliſhed and out of Force? No more, ſurely, than a dead Man can act, as he did while he was alive. The *Jews* were really always obliged to the Circumciſion of the Heart, as much as we Chriſtians are to the Anſwer of a good Conſcience: They by Circumciſion of the Fleſh to the one, and we by the Baptiſm of Water to the other. And let Mr. *Gale* deny it if he can, or dares. And ſo the Caſes run ſtill parallel, and St. *Peter*'s Words are no ſtronger againſt Infant-Baptiſm, than St. *Paul*'s againſt Infant-Circumciſion. Dr. *Whitby*'s Anſwer is therefore ſolid and ſafe, and Mr. *Gale* has not touched it in the leaſt. That alone is ſufficient; but I will offer ſome farther Obſervations to clear the Matter in St. *Peter*.

1. When he makes the Baptiſm which ſaves, to be the Antitype to the Waters of the Deluge, he does not aſcribe all the Virtue of it to the Anſwer of a good Conſcience, but ſomewhat to the outward Ordinance. For the Nature of an Antitype, in God's Word, is to be a Figure ſet over againſt another, and to anſwer it in that Oppoſition. And a material or viſible Thing it muſt be, or it cannot be a Figure correſpondent to the Type, which is always ſo. I have, in my Thoughts, run over, as far as I well could, the Types and Antitypes of the Scripture, and cannot yet think of one Inſtance to the contrary. But the Anſwer of a good Conſcience is a Thing immaterial, and inviſible to all Eyes but thoſe of God, and the Party's inward Senſes. Therefore, it cannot be that Antitypical

Baptiſm to which St. *Peter* does fully and wholly aſcribe a ſaving Efficacy, but the viſible Baptiſm claims its ſhare.

Theſe external Signs which repreſent ſpiritual and inviſible Things, are not Types, but Symbols; and if Mr. *Gale* knows no Difference between theſe, it is none of my Fault. Conſequently he, and the Authors he follows, who, 'tis like, did not nicely examine thoſe Matters, are out in their Accounts, when they ſay, the Circumciſion of the Fleſh typified that of the Heart, *Let.* XII. *p.* 446, 447. For to every circumciſed *Jew*, it ſymbolically repreſented the Circumciſion of the Heart, to which he always ſtood obliged ſo long as he lived. Whereas Types pre-figured Things at a diſtance off, which were to be fulfilled in Times to come.

2. The Apoſtle's Parentheſis, (*Not the putting away the Filth of the Fleſh, but the Anſwer of a good Conſcience toward God*) is but a Caution given to his Chriſtian Readers, that they ſhould not miſunderſtand him, and depend upon the outward Baptiſm only for Salvation. And it anſwers exactly to that of St. *Paul* to the *Jews* about Circumciſion. In it St. *Peter* does not deny all ſaving Virtue to the Ordinance of Baptiſm in the Waſhing, but he denies the chief and principal; in Compariſon whereof, the other ſinks down almoſt to nothing. That this is a common Phraſeology in the Scripture, I believe, a hundred Places, or more, might be alledged. But if they ſhould be interpreted in Mr. *Gale*'s light and rigid Senſe, as he does the Apoſtle's Parentheſis here, to deny all intirely to the leſs Principal, and affirm it wholly of the other, what mad Work ſhould we make of the Word of God? For, by his Method, we could prove, that the *Jews* tranſgreſſed the Will of God, if under the old Diſpenſation they ever offer'd any Sacrifices. For God ſaid, *I will have Mercy, and*

not

not Sacrifice. By his Method we might prove, that Christ would make a wrong Claim, if he claimed any Propriety in his own Doctrine; because he declares, The *Doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me*, John vii. 16. By the same Method we could prove, that St. *Paul* would have exceeded his Commission, if at all he had administred Christian Baptism; since he himself professes, *Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel*, 1 Cor. i. 17. And abundance more such Things we could prove after that Manner. Let our Author therefore consider, into what Absurdities he runs himself by his *Quakerly* Exposition.

3. But if the Answer of a good Conscience toward God must be fully and wholly the saving Baptism, yet I affirm, that baptized Infants may have this Answer to as good Purpose before God, as any Adult Christian upon Earth. For when by the Grace of God in Baptism the Guilt and Stain of Original Sin are washed off, their Soul and Conscience are as innocent, pure and undefiled in their Maker's Sight, as those of the best Livers in the World. What then if in Infants this Answer be not Vocal, so long as it is True and Real; Will it not so answer God's Demands from Infants? And will it not be heard in His Ears who thus hears the Voices and Cries of inanimate Things? So he heard the Cry of *Abel*'s Blood, of *Sodom*'s Sin, *of the Stone and Beam of Timber in the Wall*, Hab. ii. 11. of the Martyrs Blood under the Altar, *Rev.* vi. 10. And, to name no more, so he hears the silent Intercessions of his Son's Merits now in Heaven.

4. Or if Vocal this Answer must needs be, in Infants it may very well serve the turn by Proxy; while the Sureties undertake for their good Education and Behaviour; to which Infants on their side can put no Bar. So are their Civil Affairs in the World transacted, and so they may be transacted

for them in Religion, as the Cuſtom of God's Church has been of Old. For ſuch Tranſactions hold good and valid in their behalf by the Laws of Men; and ſo they held in *Iſrael* by the Laws of God and the Church.

5. Let us obſerve in St. *Peter* how the Antitypical Baptiſm ſaves. He ſays it is by the Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt. To his Reſurrection great Virtue toward our Salvation, is attributed in God's Word. For without it, *our Faith is vain, and we are yet in our Sins*, 1 Cor. xv. 17. By it we are juſtified unto Life, *Rom.* iv. 25. And *by his Life*, as riſen from the Dead, *we are ſaved*, *Chap.* v. 10. It is not neceſſary to diſtinguiſh in this Caſe between the Merits of his Death, and the Benefits of his Reſurrection. For he that partakes in the laſt, partakes moſt certainly in the former. Now if by Baptiſm Infants are Members of Chriſt, and get an Intereſt in him by a Spiritual Union and Fellowſhip; and if by Baptiſmal Grace the Benefits of his Death and Reſurrection are actually applied to their Souls; who can deny this to be a ſaving Baptiſm to thoſe Infants?

Mind now in how many Particulars we have upon this Head catched Mr. *Gale* tripping. 1. He affirms, that St. *Paul* does not deny the Circumciſion of the Fleſh to be ſaving, as St. *Peter* does Water-Baptiſm; when St. *Paul* rather denies more. 2. He ſays, St. *Paul* ſpeaks of Circumciſion, as aboliſhed, and not in Force; when he ſpeaks of it as a Thing which at that Time did verily profit. 3. That Circumciſion of the Fleſh was Typical of the Circumciſion of the Heart in Chriſtians, when it was evermore Symbolical of it to the *Jews* and *Hebrews*. 4. That Baptiſm is the Antitype to the Ark, when it is ſo only to the Water. And 5. That St. *Peter* denies all ſaving Virtue whatſoever to the external Ordinance of Baptiſm, which is truly

truly Antitypical; when he denies only the principal Virtue, and really aſcribes to That and the Inward, their reſpective Shares. Not to note, how he pleads and affirms that Infants can, in no ſound Senſe, (or elſe he does nothing) have the Anſwer of a good Conſcience toward God; when, I hope, I have ſhewed the contrary.

Whether Mr. *Gale* be a ſincere Manager, or no, I have Reaſon to queſtion. For he has given me Cauſe enough to ſuſpect, that his Integrity halts more than his Ability. But if ſincere he is, I muſt challenge him for a Mean Divine, whatever he is for a Philologer. For, in thoſe Parts that I have examined him, I can find but little Soundneſs and Orthodoxy. Wherefore, ſince he can put his Notions no better together, nor ſpeak more correctly to ſuch Matters, I would adviſe him friendly, never to write again upon Points of Divinity, for fear of expoſing himſelf; for they ſeem to be far remote from his Province. If at this Freedom he takes Offence, he may thank himſelf for his Contempt and Abuſes to other People. Let this ſuffice for all; for I ſhall uſe no more of ſuch Reflexions; or, at leaſt, be very ſparing.

2. We muſt now advance to St. *Matt.* xxviii. 19. *Go ye, therefore, and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt.* In St. *Peter* we lay againſt an impregnable Fortreſs, and in St. *Matthew* we muſt ingage with a Mathematical Demonſtration. But if the Lines of Proportion be not drawn with greater Exactneſs here, than thoſe of Fortification were done there, we may very boldly make our Approaches.

Mr. *Gale* has rallied all his Forces together upon this Topic, exerts his utmoſt Strength, and is prolix in the Management, becauſe, as he ſays, it ſhall ſerve inſtead of all the reſt. Therefore muſt

I alſo give it the fuller Examination. "For the "only Commiſſion it is for Baptiſm, which to all "Men muſt regulate the whole Affair; and if here "we do not find Infant-Baptiſm, where elſe can "it be found?" Certainly, any other Place of God's Book may do as well. But before I come to conſider his Reaſons, I ſhall obſerve ſome Things which will lead us to know, how it was moſt reaſonable for the Diſciples to underſtand their Maſter.

1. Whether this be the firſt and only Commiſſion Chriſt gave his Diſciples for Baptizing, may bear ſome Diſpute. For 'tis certain they baptized before; which they did either with, or without his Order. Without his Order, none I ſuppoſe, will ſay; but if with his Order, then that was their Commiſſion. For all was then delivered, not in Writing, but by Word of Mouth. An Order therefore they had to baptize Proſelytes from among the *Jews*, and now it is extended to the univerſal World. Nor was Baptiſm ſo neceſſary before to initiate into the Church, becauſe Circumciſion for that Uſe remained in its full Force. Neither did it ſucceed in its Room as yet for the ſame End, becauſe Chriſt had not yet died, nor was his Church regularly conſtituted on its proper Foundations.

Our Saviour's primary Deſign in the Commiſſion, was the Proſelyting or Diſcipling of all Nations. For the Command runs expreſly for that, *Go, and teach all Nations*. Then having converted them by teaching, he ſecondly ſhews, what they were to do with thoſe Converts; namely, to baptize them in the Name of the ever bleſſed Trinity. So the Principal Thing intended, was, to make Proſelytes, and the Command is rather a Commiſſion for that, than for baptizing. For this comes in only as an Acceſſary to the other. No particular Directions are here for the Manner of Performance of either; but the Proſelyting part is

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left on the same Foot it used to be before; and in the Room of Circumcision the Baptism is substituted, and made to run in the Name of the Holy Trinity. So the whole Business of Proselytism is left purely on the old Foundation, and the old Ordinance chang'd for a new. This is all the Alteration, and if more had been intended, more had been specified. Why else is there an Order for Change in one Part, and not in another? The only Reason can be, because no more was design'd than is express'd. Wherefore, Proselytism continuing in the same State it was in before;

2. We must see, what was the Law and Practice in that Affair from *Abraham* to *Christ*. It is certain the Law brought in all the Infants with their Parents. And Reason suggests, it would never bring in the Parents, or the Adult, like Brute Animals, without any previous Instruction, or Knowledge of the true God and his Religion. Nor could they desire it without a Competency of that Knowledge: For, *Ignoti nulla cupido.* Much less would they voluntarily embrace such a cumbersome Religion, as the *Jewish* was under the *Mosaical* Oeconomy, without Conviction of its Truth.

And of the Church's Practice in that Case, Mr. *Selden*, who was an able Judge, gives this Account: "The *Jews* admonish'd the Person, before he "was initiated into their Religion, of several "Things; *viz.* Of the Dignity of their Nation, "The Rewards of the Just and the Punish-"ments of the Unjust, The future World, The "Burthen and Weight of the Divine Precepts, "*&c.* And they required Conditions of them: "For they must promise to embrace the whole "Law intirely, not one Ordinance excepted; "and profess, that they did it out of pure "Love to the Religion." *De Jure Nat.* &c. *l.* 2. *c.* 2. Here was catechizing the Adult beforehand;

hand; but no ſuch Preliminaries could be obſerv'd with Infants, unleſs by the Mediation of Witneſſes or Undertakers: for ſuch he ſays elſewhere, they had. The Parents Converſion was evermore their Privilege, and under their Wing they enjoy'd the Benefit of Proſelytiſm and Church-Communion. Then,

3. We ought to conſider, who the Perſons were to whom our Saviour at firſt gave this Commiſſion. All *Jews*, by Birth and Education, train'd up from their Cradles in thoſe Laws and Uſages, and little acquainted with any others. Know they did the Laws of God and the Cuſtoms of their Church about Proſelytiſm, which were grown inveterate, and very hardly could they be weaned from them.

Put theſe Things together, That the Commiſſion ran for Proſelytiſm; that the Practice of the Church was to inſtruct the Adult before-hand, and bind them to Conditions, from which Infants were exempted; and that the Perſons employed to make the Proſelytes, were of *Jewiſh* Extraction, accuſtomed to thoſe Uſages; then, what can the Reſult be, but that they underſtood their Lord's Commiſſion in the ſame Senſe, ſince he gave them no Information to remove their old Prejudices and Opinions? Antecedent Laws and Cuſtoms of long Continuance, are the beſt Light to new Orders in the like Caſes, when all Things beſide are agreeable. Bound, therefore, they thought themſelves to teach the Adult, and initiate Infants without Teaching. And of their Judgment, their Practice is good Evidence. For upon Converſion of the Heads, they baptized ſeveral intire Families after the old way; in which only *Baptiſts* can believe there was never an Infant nor little Child.

To

To give this some farther Strength; They knew this Way of Proselytism was a Law of the Evangelical Covenant made with *Abraham*, which was to last for ever; No Ordinance therefore of *Moses*'s Law, that should be cancell'd. They knew God's Love was as great to converted Gentiles and their Infants, as to *Jews*; and that there was no Reason given now to abridge these Infants of their ancient Privileges. They knew the Gift and Calling of God to be without Repentance in such Cases, and that their Country-Men were mighty fond of their old Rights, Laws and Usages, to which they stiffly adhered, notwithstanding all Endeavours to take them off. Had they, therefore, upon their own Conversion, seen their beloved Infants thrown out of their Religious Society; and so denied to have God for their Father, the Church for their Mother, the Children of God for their Brethren, and Christ for their Head and Saviour; what a Shock had it been to their Minds, and what a Hindrance to their Conversion?

They knew also, what Affection Christ, on all Occasions, express'd to the young Children of those in Covenant, proposing them as Emblems of Innocence and Humility, and Exemplars of Conversion; calling them to himself, and rebuking those that forbad their coming; embracing, blessing them, and declaring, that of such was the Kingdom of Heaven; encouraging all to receive them in his Name, or as his Disciples, and imputing it as a receiving of himself; and fearfully threatning those that should offend such young Believers. These Actions they had seen, these Words they had heard, and could not, surely, without farther Notice, construe them in that Sense, as that all such Infants were to lose their Covenant Relation with God, and the sacred Franchises they once enjoyed. A Holy Seed they knew them still to be, and the

new

new initiating Ordinance to be as well fitted for their Purpoſe, as the old One, and the Borders of the Church to be inlarged. All Nations it would receive into it; and why ſhould Infants, who by the Covenant of Grace had a long uninterrupted Right and Poſſeſſion there, be caſt out, or denied Entrance?

To Perſons under all theſe Prepoſſeſſions, did Chriſt give that very ſhort and conciſe Command for making Proſelytes; and upon what could their Thoughts more naturally run, than on the old Forms and Uſages of their Church, to which they had been brought up and inured for the Regulation of the Matter? If now a great Alteration muſt be made, and the old Rules of Proſelytiſm muſt be changed by rejecting Infants, was it not neceſſary their Lord ſhould plainly tell them ſo, and not put them to gather it by odd and ſtrain'd Interpretations of his Words? For, not the leaſt Intimation of his Mind does he give them to remove their former Prepoſſeſſions; but his Commiſſion runs in the ſame Strain as it would have done under Circumciſion; or as we would now give it for proſelyting the World by Chriſtian Baptiſm, in caſe we would be ſo ſhort as our Saviour was.

For, ſuppoſe Chriſt had been pleaſed to retain Circumciſion for the initiating Ordinance, and bid his Miniſters, *Go, teach all Nations*, circumciſing *them in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy-Ghoſt*; how would they, being of *Jewiſh* Deſcent and Education have underſtood him, but according to the old Rules and Cuſtoms? And how would they have executed their Commiſſion, but by teaching the Adult beforehand, and circumciſing Infants without teaching, as was always done in their Church? Now here is only an Exchange of one Word, that of Baptiſm for Circumciſion; but this needs not at all infer any Change in the Subjects of either Ordinance, nor in the Methods of Execution.

Or,

Or, suppose any Church that taught and practised *Pædobaptism*, should commission a Set of its own Ministers to proselyte some unconverted Nation, in these Words; *Go, and teach* such a certain Nation, *baptizing them in the Name*, &c. Would those Ministers exclude the Infant Children of their Converts from Baptism, because they could not be taught? Very ignorant must they be, if they so understood their Commission, or very perverse if they wilfully mis-apply'd it after that manner. For the Doctrine of their Church should guide their Judgment, and the Rules at Home determine their Practice.

This is the Construction we give to Christ's Commission; and if the Premises be thus, it is certainly most rational in itself, most agreeable to the Laws and Customs of the Church which were then in Use, and most congruous to the Sentiments of the Ministers he employ'd and commission'd in that Office. And having noted these Things for the right Understanding of the Matter in Hand, I shall next apply my self to examine Mr. *Gale*'s Arguments raised from thence against Infant Baptism.

1. He argues from human Laws, Commissions, Warrants, Patents, &c. which bind only in relation to the Particulars specify'd in them, and must neither be exceeded, nor under-acted in the Execution, but strictly follow'd and obeyed. And thereof he is particular and tedious enough in giving Instances. Then the Substance of his Plea from thence is; "Just so must it be practised in our "Saviour's Law and Commission concerning Bap- "tism. That must regulate our whole Conduct; "so that what we find there specified, we must "observe, and what is there wanting, we must not "do; for there is no Variation allowed from our "Rule and Warrant." Herein, indeed, lies the main Strength

Strength of his Argument, but it is really as weak as we can deſire. For,

1. If the Church muſt be exactly modell'd by the Laws and Maxims of Civil Polities, then, I hope, we ſhall bring the Infants of Chriſtian Parents within the Church, by the only Ordinance appointed for that End. For, let him name me the Kingdom, or Commonwealth from *Noah*, or, if he pleaſe, from *Adam*, that did not recognize the Infant Children of its Subjects, for Subjects, or Members of it too. So muſt the Church of God do alſo, as we know it formerly did, if by thoſe Rules it is bound to act.

2. Perhaps his Rule is not always unexceptionable, there being a Liberty of Diſcretion for the Maſters, or the Subjects Benefit, ſometimes allow'd in thoſe Orders and Commiſſions. Elſe, if it be always an indiſpenſible Duty to follow them cloſely, *Cyrus* was out in his Politics, when he preferr'd *Chryſantas* before *Hyſtaſpes*, becauſe the firſt took all Opportunities to promote his Maſter's Intereſt by uncommanded Service, while the other contented himſelf with a punctual Obſervation of his Orders: Nor was *Xenophon* very wiſe in relating this Paſſage to the Praiſe of *Cyrus* and *Chryſantas*. Such Liberties are not unfrequently taken, and approved; for the *Manliana Imperia* are not every where in Faſhion. But our Author ſhould remember, that his Inſtances are but Similitudes or Compariſons, which ſerve better for Illuſtrations, than for certain Proofs, becauſe they ſeldom quadrate, or run current on all Four. This, he and his Party can tell us when they pleaſe, though they alſo uſe them when they pleaſe for ſtrong Arguments. However, in the preſent Caſe they do not quadrate. For,

3. There

3. There is no Parallel between his Inſtances and our Lord's Commiſſion. In thoſe Acts of Men, the Commiſſions, Warrants, Patents, &c. are commonly regulated by ſtated Forms, and Precedents of ſome ſtanding; which are therefore full, large, prolix, particular and expreſs; ſo that from them every one who is concern'd, may learn his Duty and his Privilege: Yet, in them or ſome of them, as exact and plenary as they are, there is Room ſometimes left for farther Enlargments or Explications, if not alſo for Retrenchments. How often do we hear of Supplemental Laws enacted on Purpoſe to make up Deficiencies in former Laws? And how often of new Orders and Inſtructions given by Governments, upon ſeveral Emergencies, to ſupply the Defects of the firſt Commiſſions? By Virtue of the New, the Commiſſioners are impowered to act beyond the Contents of the Old ones. Nay, and in thoſe which are moſt perfect, there may be ſeveral Things relating to Circumſtances and Ceremonials, which are not expreſs'd, but are left to be underſtood by common Senſe from the general Laws and current Cuſtoms in theſe Caſes. For, the Law or Warrant is never defective for leaving out needleſs Things, which, in their kind, are neceſſary to be obſerv'd, though not expreſs'd, ſo long as in all Things dubious or unknown, it gives Directions. But,

4. Our Lord's Commiſſion is exceeding ſhort, giving Order only for the adminiſtring Baptiſm in the Name of the Holy Trinity, and for the Application of it to all Nations that ſhould be converted. No doubt but he could expreſs his Mind more fully and accurately than any Man on Earth, and he certainly did it as he intended. But was he bound to inſert in a ſhort Commiſſion, all Things that we have need to know or do? Much leſs Things needleſs and ſuperfluous, which his

Wiſdom would not permit. If he ſaid enough for his preſent Purpoſe, and for the Inſtruction of his Hearers, his Commiſſion cannot be counted Defective or Imperfect, ſeeing he expreſs'd all he had then in View. And what was this but to inform his Diſciples, That Proſelytiſm to Goſpel Grace, which before was confin'd unto the *Jews*, muſt thenceforth be extended to all Nations? Therefore they muſt be preached unto to make them Converts, and then baptized. This was News to them, and needful to be given in Commiſſion. But how they were to regulate their Doctrine, and order their Baptiſm towards Proſelytes, in relation to their reſpective Ages, Capacities and Qualifications, that they might learn from common Senſe, and indeed knew it already by the Laws and Practice of their own Church in making Proſelytes. So Chriſt did not intend to comprehend the whole Theory of Baptiſm, nor all the Rules of its Practice in one ſhort Expreſſion, or two; but what he intended, that he expreſs'd.

What a ſtrange Fancy is it to imagine, that all the Rules about a prime Chriſtian Ordinance ſhould be crowded into one ſhort Verſe, and that this alone ſhould be the only Rule, and only Commiſſion to all the World, as Mr. *Gale* does? Has Chriſt left nothing for Wiſe Men to underſtand beſides? No Room for farther Enlargements and Explications? Then are St. *Paul*'s and St. *Peter*'s farther Inſtructions about Baptiſm, utterly vain, needleſs and ſuperfluous. As our Saviour ſpoke not all his Mind at once, *John* xvi. 12. ſo were not all Parts of Scripture wrote at the ſame Time, nor its Doctrines delivered intirely in a Syſtem, but as Occaſions and Emergencies did require. And one Part of it makes up the apparent Deficiencies of other Parts. So that all together, it proves a complete Code of Laws

Laws and Body of Divinity. Not, therefore, by Scraps and Parcels must we study them, but all intire, and compare Spiritual Things with Spiritual, if we will know the perfect Will of God. For the whole New Testament, with due Analogies from the Old, is our Warrant and Commission for Baptism, as it is likewise for all the Doctrines, and Practices we avow. If by any of those Mediums we justify Infant-Baptism, we gain our Point, and carry our Cause. For as former Laws and Customs in the like Cases, together with fresh Supplements and Instructions, are necessary Helps to regulate and understand Commissions among Men; so are all the Scripture Evidences concerning the Patriarchal Covenant, together with the Evangelical and Apostolical Instructions, to understand our Lord's Commission about Baptism.

Why then do our Adversaries cry out, We give up our Cause for ever, if we prove not Infant-Baptism from that Commission? and where will we find it, if we find it not there? For is it not enough for us to find it in any Part of the Scripture that is still obligatory as our Rule? Or is it not sufficient if we can shew, that the Commission does not necessarily exclude it? For my own part, I have not endeavoured to prove it from the Commission, and yet if the Rules I have given before to understand the Commission aright, be good, it is there included. But,

5. Is Mr. *Gale* really resolved to stand by his own Principle, That the Commission is our only Rule, Warrant, or Authority? Or does he jest and banter with us? If the first, let us try how the Commission will answer his own Ends and Purposes. Where will he there find Baptism with Water, since the Word *Baptize* does not necessarily imply it? For Christ baptized with another Baptism of Fire and the Holy Ghost; and so did the Apostles, in effect, when at their laying on of Hands, the Holy

Ghoſt was commonly given. And if he cannot find that, how will he find out thoſe celebrated Reſemblances of Chriſt's and our Death, Burial and Reſurrection, ſo much inſiſted upon for a certain End by *Baptiſts?* Or where will they find there the pre-requiſite Conditions of Faith and Repentance, ſince the Word μαθητεύω, if it ſignifies properly *To teach*, does not import them? For to teach ſo, as to perſuade and make Converts, gives it a complex Idea, and is an Improvement on the native Simplicity of its Meaning. And our Lord and his Apoſtles taught many whom they could not make Diſciples. Where alſo will they there find all the Doctrinals relating to the Benefits and Effects of Baptiſm? As Regeneration, Illumination, *&c.* Or were not theſe needful to be known and underſtood by Chriſtians? Indeed, when People have imbibed theſe Notions from other Parts of Scripture, they may fancy that they ſee ſome of them at leaſt in the Commiſſion, and try by Reaſoning to deduce them from it. But if they had not found them beforehand elſewhere, I am perſuaded, they had never found them here, nor have been able to prove them to the World.

Or if this will not ſatisfy, let us go to the Inſtitution of our Lord's Supper; His Command to celebrate it, is his Commiſſion; and to this we are obliged to keep as cloſely as to that for Baptiſm. They were only the College of Apoſtles to whom he gave it, and bad them do the Actions that he did. If that then be our only Commiſſion for that Sacrament, where in it ſhall we find a Warrant for communicating the Laity, Male or Female? No, we will demonſtrate the contrary by the Rules in Uſe with the *Mathematicians*. The Commiſſion of Chriſt muſt be punctually followed; neither more nor leſs muſt be done than he commanded. If there then we have not a Warrant to give his Sup-

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per unto Laymen, we have it no where. But they were the Holy Apoſtles alone whom he commanded, *Do this in Remembrance of me.* At the ſame Time he commanded them alſo to take Bread, bleſs, break, and give it to one another, as he had done. Shall the Laity do all this? Yet all they muſt do, or none, for ſo runs the only Warrant and Commiſſion. It was a Privilege therefore peculiar to the Apoſtles and Sacred Order, who alone were dignified therewith by their Lord, and diſtinguiſhed from other Chriſtians. The Laity are not qualified, becauſe they cannot perform the Conditions by doing that which Chriſt had done. And this does as ſufficiently and unavoidably exclude the Laity, as if it had been ſaid expreſly, The Laity are not to be communicated: *Quod erat demonſtrandum.* I take this to be full as good a Demonſtration as Mr. *Gale*'s is againſt Infant-Baptiſm. For it goes upon the ſame Grounds, and concludes much in the ſame Terms. His Foundation is therefore ſapped, and then the whole Superſtructure falls of Courſe.

2. From the Scriptures not warranting Infant-Baptiſm, he concludes on the Negative ſide againſt it, according to *Tertullian*'s Maxim, *Negat Scriptura quod non notat.* But if by ſound Conſequence we can deduce it from the Scripture, the Thing is there, though not the Words. For the True Senſe and Meaning of the Scripture, is Scripture. Such Conſequences are allowed by our own, and other Churches, and in ſome Caſes by the *Baptiſts* themſelves; and it is by Conſequences alone that they argue againſt baptizing Infants, and exclude them from their ancient Claim to Church Communion. Our Method is warranted by the Holy Ghoſt in citing Scripture. For how many Places of the Old Teſtament hath St. *Paul* quoted, which could prove his Point only by Conſequence? And ſo our

Saviour proved the Reſurrection of the Dead againſt the *Sadducees*. Nothing like the Word was in his Text, and the Senſe lay ſo concealed there, that probably to this Day it had been undiſcovered, had he not brought it to Light by his Omniſcience. The *Sadducees*, it ſeems, were not ſo ſagacious as ſome Men in our Days, to cavil and make Exceptions; elſe they had attempted ſomething againſt his Proof, and not ſuffered themſelves to be ſhamed and ſilenced. But tho' they ſaid nothing, and could ſay nothing to the Purpoſe, yet had they ſtill, like other Men, ſome ſecret Reſerves, which detained them in their Heterodoxy, though the Defeat they received, had forfeited their Reputation with the People. *Chriſt* and St. *Paul* were infallible in their Doctrines; but their Adverſaries took them not for ſuch, elſe their Word, without Proof, had been ſufficient. 'Twas not their Inſpiration that was regarded, but their Arguments; and to theſe alſo we refer ourſelves without pretending to their Authority.

3. Coming cloſe to the Point, Mr. *Gale* exerts his whole Energy, to prove, that Infants muſt not be baptized according to the Tenor of the Commiſſion, which is the ſole Rule and Authority, "even "to the Holy Apoſtles themſelves in this Matter." But it has been fully diſproved already. And though he ſays, Judges are impowered and obliged to try and give Sentence in ſuch and ſuch Caſes according to Law; yet not only the Statute Law, and the Words of their Commiſſion, is their Rule, but Common Law, the Cuſtoms of their reſpective Courts, and the Precedents of Ruled Caſes by former Judges, are allowed to be part of their Rule and Law.

Out of the Commiſſion he forms Two Propoſitions; "1. That the Words of it do neceſſarily ob-"lige to teach all whom they intend ſhould be "bap-

" baptized. And, 2. That this teaching must al-
" ways as necessarily precede their being baptized.
" Both which Articles do very plainly exclude
" Infants, because they are not capable of being
" taught at all, *Lett.* VII. *p.* 248, 249.

But if I am not greatly deceived, here is a Distinction without a Difference, these Two Propositions being co-incident; and he says nothing new upon the latter, which he had not said upon the former. Only Abundance of Words must be ramassed together to speak the same Thing over and over, that the Reader may be amused with Variety of Expressions, and artfully bewildred in a Labyrinth of Tautology. For the whole Account of the Demonstration issues in this; "That all People
" must be taught before they are baptized, because
" Christ's Ministers are commanded beforehand to
" teach all that they do baptize. The Phrase is
" comprehensive, equally and universally applied
" to all the Subjects of Baptism without Distinction,
" or Exception. They must teach all Nations, and
" baptize all Nations. If they do not teach them
" first, they must not baptize them; both or nei-
" ther, all or none. For they are equally com-
" manded to do the one as the other, and that to
" the same Persons indiscriminately. From
" whence it inevitably follows, that Infants must
" not be baptized, because they cannot be taught."

This, as I conceive, is the Sum and Substance of all his Argumentation. Suspecting there might be some profound Sense latent in his Words, which my shallow Understanding could not presently fathom, I read them over several Times: For he lays his whole Stress upon this Argument, and is professedly large, because it must serve instead of all the rest. At last, I concluded there is no secret Mystery in the Words, and no other Sense than what they present to the Reader's Mind at the

firſt View. Let him that deſires farther Satisfaction, look into the Beginning of that Letter, and there, if he reliſhes Verboſity, and loves to ſee Identical Sentences diverſified, he may have enough to gratify his Palate; but no more to ſatisfy his Judgment, than I have ſaid. But now to take off its Force:

1. The whole Argument is grounded on a falſe Bottom, and palpable Abſurdity. For it ſuppoſes, that the Commiſſion expreſsly contains the whole Will of our Lord about Baptiſm; when his only Meaning in it, was to inform his Miniſters, that Proſelytiſm to his Religion is not to be limitted to the *Jews*, but extended to all Nations; unto whom the Goſpel muſt be firſt preached, and then Baptiſm adminiſtred in the Name of the Eternal Trinity. But Mr. *Gale* ſtakes us down immoveably to the ſtrict Words and Limits of the Commiſſion, being not content to tell us, that all muſt be done that is therein contained, which we freely grant; but alſo, that nothing more muſt be done, which we ſtiffly deny. For why ſhould this be the Law in the preſent Injunction, any more than in others of the like Nature? The Inſtitution of our Lord's Supper ought to be as compleat and finiſhed, as this Order concerning Baptiſm; and the Weakneſs of arguing after this Manner upon that Topic, I have ſhewed before. Nor will it be amiſs to proſecute it a little farther.

For if in the Commiſſion for Baptiſm St. *Matthew* muſt be taken apart from all the other Scriptures, and be cloſely followed excluſively of them; we may as well follow any one of the Evangeliſts, in his Accounts of the Lord's Supper, excluſively to the reſt. As St. *Luke* repreſents the Injunction, there is no mention made of Eating the Bread, and Drinking the Cup; Therefore, according to the Modern way of Reaſoning, thoſe Actions ought to be omitted,

omitted, becauſe not commanded at the Inſtitution. St. *Matthew* and St. *Mark* ſpeak not a Word of receiving that Sacrament in Remembrance of Chriſt. Therefore in that Ordinance we muſt not commemorate our Saviour's Paſſion, becauſe it is not ordered in the Commiſſion.

And even in this preſent Commiſſion for Baptiſm, Water, Faith and Repentance are not expreſſed, and, as I think, are not neceſſarily underſtood by Implication. We muſt then lay them aſide as uncommanded, unleſs we be allowed to ſeek for them elſewhere. But if this be the Rule, why ſhould not the other Evangeliſts be followed, as well as St. *Matthew*? St. *Luke* omits the Commiſſion. St. *Mark*, from Chriſt's Mouth, makes Faith and Baptiſm the Conditions of Salvation, but does not inſtruct us in whoſe Name the Baptiſm ſhould be adminiſtred. From St. *John* we learn, that Chriſt's Diſciples did baptize; but he omits the Commiſſion, with the Ages, Sexes and Qualifications of the Perſons that were, or ſhould be baptized. And yet he ſays, that he had given us Light enough to form a ſaving Faith by his ſacred Hiſtory and Inſtructions, *John* xx. 31.

By theſe Things we underſtand, that Chriſt's Commiſſions and Commands did not always run in ſuch a Strict and Preciſe Form of Words, as thoſe of Men uſe to do: Or, at leaſt, that the Evangeliſts wrote not by ſettled Precedents, but took the Freedom to expreſs their Saviour's Will in different Forms and Words, as they judged convenient. From all together, and from other inſpired Writers, muſt we form our Notions, and learn the Pleaſure of our God. But if we rigidly inſiſt on the Words of a ſingle Writer, or ſingle Paſſage, in Excluſion to the reſt, we mangle the Word of God, and ſhall very deſervedly for our Pains embrace and patronize Error inſtead of Truth.

2. Mr.

2. Mr. *Gale* tells us; " Our Lord does not ſay, " Ye ſhall baptize the whole Nation, or every " Perſon of every Nation, or all of all Nations, " which would have made the Caſe very different " from what it is; but only indefinitely, all " Nations. Scarce a Youngſter, who has begun " his Logick, but he is acquainted with the Di- " ſtinction between *genera ſingulorum*, and *ſingula* " *generum*. So the only Meaning is, that the " Goſpel ſhould be preach'd to all other Nations, " as before it was to the *Jews*; and that they " ſhould be baptiz'd, if willing and capable. " Why, then, all Nations are taught when the Adult are taught; for that is the *genera ſingulorum*: And ſo there is no need of teaching Infants to fulfil our Saviour's Precept, becauſe they are comprehended in the *Genus*. And ſo are all Cities, Towns and Families taught, when the Heads and Adult therein are taught. For Infants and all thoſe that cannot act for themſelves, are included in the Principals, and determined by their Actions. So the Chiefs acting for them, and repreſenting them, they may, under their Covert, receive the Benefit of being baptiz'd.

But then they muſt not be baptiz'd, unleſs they are perſonally taught; for none beſide thoſe that are firſt taught in Perſon, ſhall be baptiz'd. This I deny, becauſe they are accounted as taught and converted in their Heads, as the *Species* in the *Genus*. But they are not ſo accounted as baptiz'd, becauſe this muſt needs be a Perſonal Act; elſe there is no need of baptizing them at all when they come of Age. If this Doctrine ſeems ſtrange at firſt hearing, the Strangeneſs may ceaſe, when it appears to be the Law and Practice of God and Men.

Among

Among Men, if Foreigners be naturaliz'd, they are bound to the Duties and Services requir'd of natural Subjects by the Municipal Laws, as they enjoy their Privileges. The Conditions impos'd at their Admittance they must actually submit unto, and in Person too, if that be demanded, before they can receive the Benefit. But not so their Infants and Minors, because the Law construes it as done by their Parents in their Name and Behalf; and yet are they Joint-partakers of the Privileges. Suppose it should be one Condition, that those who are to be naturaliz'd, must, before their Admission into the Body Politick, be competently instructed in the Laws and Customs of the Nation; never would any wise and equitable Judges interpret this to the Exclusion of Infants, because they cannot be so taught; except the Case had been particularly specified to that Purpose by the Legislature. For it is a hard Case, and contrary to the known and approved Usages in that Affair. But it would be determined to answer the End of the Law, if the Parents were instructed, and Engagement made for the Infants to be in due Time. Yet, if there was, without Exception, a Sum of Money for every Body to pay down before-hand for his Naturalization, the Parents might do it in the Infants Name, and the Law would impute it as their Act. Or if some Ceremony was necessary to be used for that End, this also might be transacted by others upon their Persons, and in their Behalf: And it would receive the same Construction.

It is needless to exemplify this farther in Matters belonging to Corporations and Charter Acts: For the same Laws and Customs would hold there. After the same Manner may Infants be admitted into the Church and its Privileges by Baptism, which is a necessary Rite for that Purpose; for we know no other Door of Entrance, or visible Rite of Admission thither.

Against

Againſt theſe Methods obſerv'd by Men, there is no Room to except, becauſe God hath approv'd and juſtified them by his own Acts. For ſo were Infants incorporated into the Church from *Abraham*'s Time by his appointed Ordinance; which the Apoſtles knew very well; and therefore in that Senſe it was natural for them to underſtand the Commiſſion of their Lord.

3. Either Infants are included in the Commiſſion for Baptiſm, or they are not. Our Adverſaries ſtrenuouſly contend for the Negative, and affirm, that it includes and concerns the Adult only, who can be taught. If ſo, this Commiſſion makes nothing at all for or againſt their Baptiſm of Infants, becauſe they are no ways concern'd in it. Our Saviour had them not then in his Mind or Thoughts, but ſpoke only of Adult Perſons. For, how ſhall we know his Thoughts, but by his Words? And yet his Words do not mention Infants. So their Right to Baptiſm may ſtill be ſafe enough on other Foundations. And moſt unreaſonable are the *Baptiſts* in applying this Commiſſion to them, or interpreting it to their Excluſion, when they acknowledge it means them not, but another ſort of Perſons that are very different; and within theſe Bounds it muſt be punctually circumſcrib'd.

What is it then but a Particular Propoſition, not an Univerſal? What but a definite and limitted Rule, relating to certain Perſons ſo and ſo qualified, not an indefinite, relating to all, without Exception? "I'm ſure to argue thus "from a Particular, to a General, is an Er- "ror in Logick, ſays Mr. *Stennett*, *Ch.* x. *p.* "207." Is this Conſequence therefore good? All Adult Perſons muſt be firſt taught, or they ſhall not be baptiz'd; but Infants cannot be taught, therefore they ſhall not be baptiz'd. No, the Mathematical Demonſtration, is a poor Sophiſm, which

which there is ſcarce a Youngſter in Logic, but can eaſily detect it. Such a Propoſition as this, we demand for our Conviction: No Perſon at all ſhall be baptized, unleſs he be taught beforehand, and profeſſes his Faith and Repentance: Or thus, Whoſoever will be baptiz'd, he muſt be firſt taught to believe, and repent. Of this kind is not the Commiſſion, but is wholly reſtrained to the Adult, as our Antagoniſts ſay. Nor is there any Propoſition equivalent to it in the whole Goſpel. And therefore, inſtead of Logic and Demonſtration, they ſhall not palm upon us manifeſt Shams and Fallacies.

That Adult Perſons muſt have previous Inſtructions, and make Profeſſion of Faith and Repentance before Baptiſm, no conſiderate Man, will ever deny. It has been always the Doctrine and Practice of *Pædobaptiſts*. Againſt whom, then, do the *Antipædobaptiſts* diſpute, when they frame Arguments, and alledge Inſtances from Scripture and Antiquity, to prove the Point? They only fight with their own Shadows, but do not at all oppoſe their Adverſaries. Could they produce a thouſand Proofs to that purpoſe, they ſpeak not a Word in prejudice to our Cauſe, but only prove, what we own and affirm, teach and practiſe, as well as they. Yet, the Scripture Inſtances and Allegations, in which theſe Conditions for Baptiſm are requir'd, do all confeſſedly belong and relate to Adult Perſons. And if ſo, what Weakneſs or Perverſeneſs is it to make any Mention of them in this Controverſy? And of the ſame kind are thoſe which are fetch'd from Church Antiquity. We may ſee a Specimen of it in Mr. *Gale*'s Citation of St. *Jerom*. "They firſt teach "all the Nations: Then when they are taught, "they baptize them with Water; for it cannot be "that the Body ſhould receive the Sacrament of "Baptiſm,

" Baptiſm, unleſs the Soul have before received " the true Faith. " So ſays that Father. But does he not mean it of Adult Perſons? Or dares Mr. *Gale* challenge him therefore for an *Antipædobaptiſt*? No queſtion but he would, had St. *Jerom* liv'd about *Tertullian*'s Time. Juſt ſo ſome of the *Baptiſts* repreſent our Church, as demanding in her Catechiſm actual Faith and Repentance in all Perſons, before Baptiſm, and make her feloniouſly to deſtroy her ſelf, by practiſing contrary to her Doctrine in *Pædobaptiſm*.

4. Particular Propoſitions limitted to certain Perſons, can then only be applied and accommodated to other Perſons, when their Caſe is parallel, or when there is a Parity of Reaſon to juſtify the Application. But is it ſo between the Adult and Infants, that they ſhould be equally ty'd to the ſame Conditions before they ſhall enjoy their ancient Privilege of Incorporation with God's Church? Who cannot preſently ſee the great Diſparity of their State?

For, 1. The Adult are capable of actual Faith and Repentance, but not to Infants in their preſent Condition.

2. If the Adult believe not the Goſpel, when it is propos'd to them in its cleareſt Evidences for Conviction, they are ſtubborn and contumacious in their Infidelity, and therefore hopeleſs. A poſitive Act or Habit of Diſbelief they have, which is contrary to Faith, and utterly incapacitates them for Goſpel Grace. Whereas, Infants are purely paſſive in the Caſe, and not active, like the others, in Unbelief. As they do not actually believe, ſo neither do they diſbelieve. Having therefore no Habit, nor Act of obſtinate Diſbelief in their Hearts, there is all juſt Preſumption on their ſide, that they will be educated in Faith and Piety, as the Children of Believers and Proſelytes

ſelytes us'd to be. So their Caſe is widely different from that of Adult Perſons, and they ought not, in Reaſon, be oblig'd to the ſame Meaſures.

Should we ſhew the like Rigors towards them in other Matters, they muſt be ſtarv'd out of the World, becauſe they cannot work; For, *he that will not work, neither ſhould he eat*: And be held irremediably damn'd, becauſe, we read, *He that believeth not, is damned*: And, *Except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* But, as common Equity teaches our Adverſaries to exempt Infants from theſe hard Laws, and reſtrain them to the Adult; ſo ſhould the ſame Equity teach them alſo to exempt them from the Conditions required in the Adult for Baptiſm. For, in Reaſon, they ought no more be refuſed their ancient Privilege of Church Communion for want of Faith and Repentance, than be counted damned for the ſame Want, or be ſtarv'd becauſe they do not work; ſince it is no leſs neceſſary to be a Chriſtian, than it is to eat and drink. Equity therefore, and not Rigor, ſhould interpret Scripture in Favour to their Claims.

After this, Mr. *Gale*, in a pompous Train of Quotations from all ſorts of Authors, prepares to demonſtrate, that μαθητεύω, ſignifies *to teach*, or to make Diſciples by Teaching and Inſtruction; which is not competible with the State of Infants, who ought not therefore, to be baptized. His Deſign is levell'd againſt Doctor *Hammond*, Mr. *Wall*, and others of our Church, who hold that μαθητεύω, may ſignify to make Diſciples by the Right of Baptiſm, without any previous Teaching or Inſtruction. I think it needleſs to wade into this verbal Controverſy, but ſhall ſatisfy myſelf, and I hope all impartial Judges, with an obvious Remark upon the Matter.

There

There have been in the Church of God, at leaſt from *Abraham*'s Time, two Sorts of Diſciples; thoſe that are initial and incomplete, and thoſe that are full and perfect. The firſt have been always made by an External Rite or Ordinance; the others not only by that, but by Inſtructions alſo joyned therewith, to which, their inward Qualifications were ſuppos'd to anſwer. The firſt are no leſs truly and properly to be call'd Diſciples, than the others, though not in ſuch a complete Senſe: As an Infant is as truly and properly a Rational Creature, though he cannot reaſon, as a Man of Years who has the Faculty of Reaſoning in Perfection. And ſo, in the initial Senſe, Infants may alſo be counted Diſciples, or μαθηταὶ, and μαθητέυω, actively taken to make them ſo, as μαθητέυομαι, paſſively, to be Diſciples.

That this Account is true, will appear from the common Senſe and Cuſtoms of the World in that Affair. *Scholar* and *Diſciple* are but two Words for the ſame Thing. Suppoſe a Child be entred into a School by his Parents, and admitted by the Maſter with a Deſign of being taught; he is, from that very Minute, his Scholar, though he has not as yet learned a Letter of his Book in that School, or from that Maſter. For the bare Acts of Entrance on the one ſide, and of Admittance on the other, give the Name of Scholar effectually to the Child. The Compact and Agreement is paſt, and that founds the Right and Relation between the Parties concern'd. And the Intention of learning, and being taught, ſerves for the Act, till the proper Time for Performance is come. And ſo it is with a Scholar in the Univerſity: The Name is entred into the Books, the Tutor is choſen, and all the Formalities are tranſacted; he is thenceforth a Scholar of that College where he is entred, and a Member of the Univerſity, though he preſently goes

goes into the Country, and does not come for a while to ſtudy there, and, perhaps, never, being hindred by ſome Caſualties intervening. I take this to be Matter of Fact, and therefore undeniable. So it certainly was with circumcis'd Infants in the Church of God before Chriſt's Time, and ſo it may be ſince. Bare Admiſſion into his Church by Baptiſm is ſufficient to make and denominate Infants his Diſciples. For that alone will ground their Relation to him as their Maſter, and brings them under Engagement to perform Covenants. And if this be the common Senſe and Uſage of Mankind in ſuch Caſes, it ſignifies little to ramaſs a Heap of Authorities to prove another Notion of Diſciple-ſhip, ſince the one may be true, and not contradict the other.

Many of Mr. *Gale*'s Authors may be challeng'd from him, and the Conſtruction he gives them, be fairly diſputed. Nay, and ſeveral of them muſt be, by Reaſon they were profeſs'd *Pædobaptiſts*, both Ancient and Modern. For if they allow of no other Senſe of μαθητεύω, than to make Diſciples by teaching, how came they to allow and practiſe Infant Baptiſm, which makes Diſciples without teaching? If ſo, they muſt contradict themſelves, and their Authority is of no Force.

Beſide, it muſt be obſerv'd, that Hiſtorians, Biographers, and ſuch Writers, giving Account of Paſſages fully tranſacted, muſt take Diſciples, in the moſt full and perfect Senſe of the Word, for Perſons that have gone through with their Studies in their reſpective Schools; and not for bare Beginners, that have juſt given in their Names to their ſeveral Maſters. That, therefore, preſents us with the full Idea, or completeſt Notion of the Word. whereas had they accounted only for their Entrance and Admiſſion into the Schools, I am perſuaded, they had never refuſed to give them the Name of

Diſciples upon that Act alone. But as they had a quite different Thing in View, ſo they muſt give a different Account.

And farther yet; this was moſt natural and neceſſary for them to do, unleſs they had a Mind to trifle and play the Fools. For, if Authors intend to give Accounts and Deſcriptions, whence ſhould they borrow their Characters of Things or Perſons, but from the moſt perfect in the kind? As for Inſtance, If a Man were to deſcribe a Perſon of the Human Species, would he take his Characters from an Embryo or Infant, becauſe he is of that Species? And not rather from a Man, who is perfect in his Kind? How ſilly and ridiculous would that be? So truly muſt Wiſe Men account for the Name of a Diſciple, taking him in the complete Senſe; and yet no more deny a baptized Infant to be a Diſciple, than they deny an Infant to be of the Human Species, when they deſcribe a Man.

If thus the Matter ſtands, Mr. *Gale*'s Travails do prove abortive, and will never conclude his Point. For the Thing incumbent on him to ſhew, was not, that Diſciple-ſhip, in its perfect Notion, includes Learning, or being taught; but that there can be no ſuch a Notion as an initial or incomplete Diſciple; and that his Authors did really mean to exclude and deny it in their Accounts. Then might he have ſpar'd his laborious Pains to prove the other Notion, in which he could meet with no Opponents.

We have now ſeen in what Senſe it was natural for our Lord's Miniſters, being of a *Jewiſh* Extract and Education, to underſtand his Commiſſion. We have ſeen, that his Command for Proſelytiſm and Baptiſm in St. *Matthew*, is not our whole Commiſſion or Warrant for thoſe Matters, but the whole Word of God that concerns the Evangelical Covenant. We

have

have seen, that the Conditions of Baptism must be confined only to the Adult, and do not concern Infants. And we have seen that Disciple-ship may include them in its Notion, as well as the others. But what has Mr. *Gale* proved? That Adult Persons must be taught before they be baptized, and nothing else. Here we agree, and so far he shall have his Argument, and carry his Cause.

3. Some alledge *Mark* xvi. 16. against Infant-Baptism: *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved.* "There Faith goes before Baptism, as "the Condition requisite to receive it. Infants, "therefore, wanting Faith, must not be baptized, "because they cannot perform the Condition.

But the Scripture is not always so curious in its Style, as to place those Things first, which must go first in the Order of Time; else this Absurdity would follow, that People must repent before they believe, because the Words are so placed, *Mar.* i. 15. *Acts* xx. 21. Again, it is not true, that Faith is there made the Condition of Baptism, but both Faith and Baptism are made the Conditions of Salvation. And therefore, it might be argued from thence more agreeably to the Letter of the Text, that Infants cannot be saved without Faith, than that they cannot be baptized without it. But since, to avoid this Stroke, the *Baptists* acknowledge the Words to mean only the Adult, the Answer is given already. And so it is to all their Allegations out of the *Acts of the Apostles*, because they confess all those were Adult Persons, of whom Faith was required in order to Baptism. Thus have I said enough, if not too much, to their Demands of Faith and Instruction in all the Candidates for that Sacrament. But,

4. Their Demand of Repentance in them all for that End, is still more unreasonable. Only once in Scripture is that required as a Condition antecedent

unto Baptiſm in thoſe that would be Chriſt's Diſciples, *Acts* ii. 38. And then it was required only of Perſons arrived to Maturity of Years, who had ſignalized and diſtinguiſhed themſelves for atrocious Guilt, in murdering the Juſt One, and crucifying the Lord of Glory. Set the Infants of Chriſtian Parents on the ſame Level with thoſe murderous *Jews*, and then require of them the ſame Repentance to make them Chriſtians. Actual Sin they never committed againſt God, nor ſhould they therefore be bound to actual Repentance. And as *Adam*'s Tranſgreſſion was derived, or imputed unto them, without their own Act, or perſonal Fault, ſo may Chriſt's Merits be applied to their Souls for Grace and Pardon in Chriſtian Baptiſm, without actual Faith of their own. Paſſive they wholly are in the Imputation of that Sin, and paſſive they are in receiving Pardon. *John* baptized with the Baptiſm of Repentance, and required Confeſſion of Sins, and Faith in Him that was to come after him. But Chriſt he received to Baptiſm, though he had no Sin to confeſs and repent of, and no future Meſſias to believe in. This ſhews, that the Conditions of Baptiſm are only demanded where they are neceſſary, and that Baptiſm may be duly adminiſtred, where all the Ends and Benefits of it are not attainable.

For their Innocence and Simplicity, Chriſt propoſes little Children as Patterns of Converſion to the World, *Matt.* xviii. 3. But the Copy needs not tranſcend the Original, nor the Exemplification be more perfect than the Example. It is ſufficient therefore, for Adult Perſons to be qualified for Baptiſm and God's Kingdom, as their Patterns are. And ſo Infants, without Repentance, are altogether as well prepared for Baptiſmal Grace, as others can be with it. From whence we firmly conclude, that

that their want of Repentance is no manner of Hindrance to their Baptism.

After all, we will suppose, but not grant, that Instruction, Faith and Repentance were Conditions indispensibly required before Baptism; yet what Reason can be given, why Infants may not submit unto, or take upon them those Conditions, as well as they could undertake a Ministerial Charge and Office in God's House? If no Reason can be assigned for it, we thus justify the Assumption: *Moses* speaking of the *Kohathites*, Num. iii. 28. says; *In the Number of all the Males, from a Month Old and upwards, were Eight thousand and six hundred keeping the Charge of the Sanctuary.* That Children of a Month Old were Infants, cannot be denied; nor that the Sanctuary was God's House. There it is expressly said, that they kept a Charge; which was a Ministerial Office imposed on the *Kohathites* by the Divine Law. If Infants therefore kept that Charge, they were Ministers in God's House, and their Charge and Ministration lasted about Fifteen or Sixteen Centuries. So the Matter of Fact is proved from the Scripture.

Against this it will be pleaded, "That the Infants did not personally keep the Charge, because none were to officiate in the Sanctuary before they were 30 Years Old. Others, therefore, did the whole Duty, and their Ministrations were accepted in the Infants Name and Stead." This is true; but we dispute not about the Manner, so long as the Thing itself must be allowed. For the Charge was imposed on the whole Family of Males, from a Month old and upwards, and that Charge they kept; the Service of those that were qualified to act, being imputed to all, and accepted for the rest. Even so, if it had pleased God to lay the Duties of Faith and Repentance on all Persons that should be baptized, the actual Performance need

not lie on Infants by reaſon of their Incapacity; but a Vicarious Diſcharge of it by Parents and Friends, would ſerve the Turn. Theſe may ingage for their Chriſtian Education in Faith and Piety, 'till they come of Age. And this will juſtify our Church in baptizing Infants, upon the Engagements of Sponſors and Sureties in their behalf.

But it may be farther pleaded, "That the Levi-
" tical Services about the Sanctuary, conſiſted in
" corporal Acts, which might be conveniently
" done by Deputies and Subſtitutes. But Learning
" the Will of God, Faith and Repentance, are Moral
" and Intellectual Acts, which every one muſt diſ-
" charge in Perſon, or they will not be accepted."
To this I anſwer, That the Sanctuary was the moſt Holy Place in the Tabernacle, where God dwell'd between the Cherubims, and from whence he gave his Oracles and Reſponſes. Therefore, were Awe, Reverence, Fear and inward Adoration due to God from All that officiated in his Preſence. Alſo a juſt Proportion of Reſpect and Reverence was payable to the Sanctuary itſelf, with its ſacred Furniture. The Congregation that ſtood at a greater Diſtance off, muſt yet reverence God's Sanctuary, *Lev.* xix. 30. Much more thoſe Miniſters that approached to officiate in his Sight, and to bear their Charge. For, ſo great was the Awe and Regard the *Kohathites* muſt bear to the ſacred Utenſils which they carried covered on their Shoulders, that *they muſt not touch them, leſt they die*, *Num.* iv. 15. Now theſe inward Adorations and Acts of Reverence, were no leſs Moral and Intellectual Duties, or Acts of the Mind and Underſtanding, than Learning, Faith and Repentance are. And, conſequently, if thoſe Acts belonged to the Charge of Infants, and God accepted of a Vicarious Performance in their Stead, the ſame he may do in the Conditions of Baptiſm.

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We know, Christ accepted of the Faith of Parents for their sick Children, and of Friends for diseased Persons, that were necessarily absent, to vouchsafe them the Favour of Bodily Cures. And we trust, that God is not more Merciful to Bodies than to Souls, but passes the same gracious Construction on his Peoples Actions in both Cases, where he sees the same Reason and Necessity. No new and unprecedented Doctrine do we here deliver, but what has been frequently warranted by God's Procedure with the *Jews*: And this, in Matters that were more difficult and remote from Grace. For, how often did he pardon the Murmurs and Rebellions of that whole Nation for the sake of *Abraham* and their Fathers, who had been dead long before? And if his Mercy extended so far to wilful Sinners, upon the bare Motive and Consideration of their Predecessors Piety; it can be no strange or groundless Divinity, to hold, that he will befriend harmless Infants for the sake of their religious Parents, seeing his Mercy reaches to a *Thousand Generations in them that love him.* This, if possible, should put the Impudence of certain Writers to the Blush, who are not ashamed to publish it before the World, that Infants cannot be the better for their Parents Piety, nor receive any Benefit to their Souls on its Account.

What more can be urged against this, I am not aware; but be it what it will, I do suppose it capable of a fair Reply.

And so have I gone thro' with my Vindication of Infant-Baptism from God's Word, and have endeavoured to prove the Lawfulness of it, and to take off our Adversaries Objections against it, which I thought to be of any Moment and Importance. What Satisfaction it will give the Reader, I know not, but am sure, I have managed it with the utmost Fidelity in my Power, and have advanced

nothing but what I believe in my Heart to be the Truth. To God's Bleſſing I therefore leave the Iſſue, and ſhall only beg Leave to make a few further Remarks on Mr. *Gale*'s wary Conduct in this Affair, before I conclude.

In his Purſuits of Mr. *Wall*, he very prudently ſtopped his Courſe at St. *Cyprian*'s Door; becauſe he ſaw the Evidences then againſt him for Infant-Baptiſm, were too ſtrong and bright to be contradicted. From thenceforth he gives up the Cauſe, though not without ſome few Exceptions. "For, "as he imagines, the reſt of the Church beſide "the *Africans*, did not ſo ſoon ſtrike in with the "grand Innovation, and ſubmit to baptize their "Infants." But in taking his Leave, he paſſes his Compliments on thoſe Southern Nations, and gives their Character; "That the *Africans* were "Men generally weak of Underſtanding, *Let.* "XIII. *p.* 529. And though their Biſhops were "no wiſer than to admit the Error, perhaps, only "as an indifferent Thing, or in Caſes of Danger, "the *Greek* Churches ſeem very plainly to have "been ſtill of another Opinion." Alſo to ſhew that he can maſter Paradoxes; he tells us in the Sequel, "That the Piety and Zeal of the Ancients, was ſo "far from being a Security againſt this Innova- "tion, that, in Reality, it tended very much to be- "tray them into it." To this Effect are his Words. But then,

1. If Piety and Zeal do really betray into Error, and this too of that pernicious Conſequence, as to leave to the Chriſtian World neither a True Church, Miniſtry, nor Sacraments, what dangerous and traiterous Things muſt Zeal and Piety be? Muſt we then be Prophane and Cold, that we may be Safe? Yet was it Chriſt's Judgment, that True Piety was the beſt Expedient to know the Truth, *John* vii. 17. and *Chap* xiv. 21. And ſo was *Solo-*

mon's,

mon's, Prov. xxviii. 5. As St. *Paul* says, on the other side, That a Pleasure in Unrighteousness is the way to be betrayed into Lies, strong Delusions, and damnable Errors, 2 *Thess.* ii. 10, *&c.* Let who will, or can therefore believe Mr. *Gale* in this Particular. But if by *Piety* and *Zeal*, he means *Folly* and *Superstition*, or some *Passionate Heats* and *Transports* of that Nature in the Ancients, we must crave his Pardon, if we dissent from that Account.

2. When he says, "That Infant-Baptism was admitted at first, perhaps, only as a Thing indifferent, or in Cases of Danger;" I suppose, the *Perhaps* was foisted in to save the Credit and the Conscience, but is insufficient to do either. For he knows the contrary very well, and owns, that they made it necessary, by a Mistake of *John* iii. 5. as he informs us. St. *Cyprian*'s Epistle to *Fidus* would alone instruct him, that they counted it not as a Thing indifferent. Or, if they had done so, Mr. *Gale* and his Party, who make such a Stir about it, as a necessary Cause of Separation, would never pass their Accounts. And he knows, that the Cases of Danger introduced the Asperson or Perfusion of *Clinics*, as St. *Cyprian* expresses it, *Epist. ad Magnum*; Not the Baptizing of Infants. Either, therefore, their Admission of the Error must be a Proof of their great Weakness, or the *Perhaps* is an Argument of our Author's great Wariness.

3. His characterizing the *Africans*, "That they "were generally Men of weak Understandings, "and that the Bishops were no wiser than to admit "the Error;" falls in with the common Observation and Practice; That the Evidences against us must be disgraced. He thinks Mr. *Wall* deserved Animadversion for taking too much Liberty with *Tertullian*, who, for a well-known Reason, is a favourite Author with the *Antipædobaptists*. But he cannot say, that Mr. *Wall* wronged him, since he is, for

for ſome Centuries, the moſt exceptionable Church-Writer of all the *Africans*. Yet was *Tertullian* but a ſingle Man; whereas Mr. *Gale* may, with a good Grace, traduce the whole Body of the *Africans* in general, as Fools and Fathers of Falſhoods, which is the true *Engliſh* of his Words, becauſe they patronized a Practice that he diſlikes. And this we muſt take for Candor and Impartiality!

But whether the *Africans* in general had ſuch weak Heads, and the Biſhops no more Wiſdom, than to corrupt the Church with miſchievous Errors, let their Writings, which are ſtill extant, teſtify. They ſhine much too brightly in *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory*, and in the Eye of the Learned World, for to need an Apology. That Conference alone, which was managed between the Catholics and the Donatiſts under *Marcellinus*, vindicates them ſufficiently from this Reproach, and ſhews, that the *Africans* wanted not for Subtlety and Acuteneſs. And while the Old *Romans* were ingaged in Wars with thoſe Nations, whatever Cauſe they had to complain of the *Punic* Faith, they found no Cauſe to inſult over the *Punic* Folly. Or, if ſome Errors may be proved on the *Africans* in thoſe Days, I hope this does not quite deſtroy their Credit, and place them in the ſame Claſs with the Fabulous Rabbies. Elſe, how can other Biſhops and Churches eſcape? And, particularly, how can the beloved *Tertullian* maintain his Credit, and come off with flying Colours?

4. When our Author ſays, "That the *Greek* Churches "ſeem plainly to have been ſtill of another Opinion," he cites *Dionyſius*, the illuſtrious Biſhop of *Alexandria*, on his ſide, in this Paſſage concerning *Novatian*: "He ut-"terly diſallows of Holy Baptiſm, and ſubverts the Faith "and Profeſſion which goes before it." Then he adds a little after; "It is impoſſible a Man who never "dreamed of Infant Baptiſm, ſhould ſpeak more plainly "againſt it: Nor can we expect to find any Paſſages more "inconſiſtent with that Practice, than this is."

Low Water indeed it muſt then be with the *Antipædobaptiſts*, for ſuch Teſtimonies and Authorities. For, can he not find a plainer Paſſage to his Purpoſe in our Church Catechiſm, not to ſpeak of our beſt Divines, and yet we are not againſt Infant-Baptiſm? I do not believe that illuſtrious Biſhop dreamed at all while he was Writing; yet living not very far from *Africa*, where St. *Cyprian*, with 66 Biſhops, had in a Synod eſtabliſhed Infant Baptiſm,

tism, he must be rather ignorant than illustrious, if he knew nothing of that Matter. Or if the News at last reached his Ears, he and others could not but be strangely surprized at the Boldness of those few Bishops, in Comparison, who without consulting foreign Churches, ventured to settle a wicked Innovation, contrary to the Doctrine and Practice of the Catholic Church, to our Lord's Commission, and to the Laws and Usage of the Apostles.

According to Mr. *Gale*, the Rise of *Pædobaptism* in *Africa*, must be fixed about the Beginning of the Third Century. For an Attempt was made by some to introduce it in *Tertullian*'s Time, against which he made a Vigorous Stand, but was not able to stem the Tide. He, indeed, strenuously opposed it with his *Utilior est*, which, in our Author's Sense, we must render Unlawful. But notwithstanding the Strenuous Opposition, it broke in upon the *African* Church before St. *Cyprian*'s Time, and under him got Synodical Establishment. Other Churches, and especially the *Greek*, were not yet infected with the Error. But, however, as Errors are contagious, it crept in gradually among them also, 'till at length it over-ran the Christian World, to the incredible Detriment of Religion. For the Wise *Asiatics* and *Europeans* had yet no more either of Wisdom or Honesty, than to imitate the Foolish *Africans*, and permit them to impose their novel and pernicious Error on their Understandings; and that too under the Pretext of Apostolical Antiquity and Tradition. For it had no more Modesty than to make this impudent Claim in St. *Austin*'s Time, and before that, if the interpolated *Origen* might be heeded. Nor had any Christian in the whole Church, Orthodox or Heretic, Catholic or Schismatic, the Courage and Integrity to make the least Opposition to its Encroachments, except the brave *Tertullian*, who, bearing a mortal Hatred to all Errors and Innovations, endeavoured, though without Success, to stifle it in its Cradle. For *Nazianzen*'s sneaking Advice for Three or Four Years Delay, and this with Exception also, came in too late, the Error having then struck too strong a Root for such a feeble Hand to pluck it up. This is my Descant on Mr. *Gale*'s Account, concerning the Rise and Progress of *Pædobaptism*.

But let our Adversaries say what they please, neither *Tertullian* nor *Nazianzen* attempted to extirpate it with that masculine Vigor which became the Champions of the Truth, by dressing it out in the proper Colours of

Sin

Sin and Unlawfulneſs; but they reſted in the bare Plea of Inexpediency. A Criminal Act againſt Christ's Commiſſion, and a Mock-Baptiſm, which, if it had its Courſe, would ſoon unchurch the Christian World, they ſhould have called it, in caſe they had been ſo wiſe and zealous as our preſent *Antipædobaptiſts*. An *Anathema* they ſhould have pronounced againſt its Abettors; and, if they would not be reformed, they ſhould have utterly broke off Communion with them. But *Tertullian*'s *African* Wit and Smartneſs in expoſing the Tenets he did not like, and *Nazianzen*'s florid Vein of Oratory, intirely failed them here. Thus dodging and dallying where their main Energy ſhould have beeen exerted, they only ſtruck at the Branches to trim it a little, but left the Root and Stem in the Ground untouch'd, which, in ſpite of their faint Attempts, ſhot forth and fluoriſh'd like the Stump of the Tree in *Nebuchadnezzar*'s Viſion. All this while the univerſal Church beſide, were in a Lethargic Sleep, tamely admitting the corrupt Practice as an indifferent thing, and little dreaming, that it would unchurch Poſterity, and ſo prove fatal to their Religion. For, in the Fourth Century, at fartheſt, it grew up to be an Epidemical Diſeaſe, that overſpreaded the Church; and the Chriſtian World might groan to ſee itſelf ſo ſuddenly turn'd into *Pæbobaptiſt*. Other Errors and Innovations of leſſer Note they could ſtrenuouſly oppoſe with a becoming Zeal and Piety; but here, their Zeal and Piety themſelves play'd the Traytors with them, and help'd to faſcinate them into Deluſion!

This Account is incredible enough in itſelf; but if, notwithſtanding that, true it muſt be with our Antagoniſts, I would gladly be reſolv'd in one Difficulty, which ſeems to me unſurmountable; and which Mr. *Gale*, for a Reaſon he knows beſt, and we may gueſs at, has left altogether unattempted. For, it is well known, that St. *Auſtin*, towards the End of the Fourth Century, affirm'd, That the univerſal Church had always held and retain'd Infant Baptiſm, as a Thing that was deliver'd and handed down unto it by Apoſtolical Authority, *De Bapt. cont. Donat. l.* 4. *ad fin.* Again, after the Beginning of the next Century, in his Book *De Nat. & Grat. c.* 6. he ſays; "That to his "Remembrance, he never heard any other thing from any "Chriſtian that believed the Scriptures, whether he were "Catholic, Heretic, or Schiſmatic; but they all held, "that in Chriſt's Church, from the Time it was founded,

"In-

" Infants were baptized for the Remiſſion of Sin. And " he believes St. *Jerom*, with all his Reading and Learning, " could find no otherwiſe. And, as St. *Auſtin* has record- " ed it, *Pelagius* himſelf affirms, that he never had heard, " even any impious Heretic or Schiſmatic, that would ſay, " Infants ſhould not be baptiz'd in order to Salvation; and " none ſo ignorant of the Scripture, that he would in the " leaſt think it.

Here is a bold Appeal made to the Chriſtian World for the Apoſtolical Antiquity and Univerſal Practice of Infant-Baptiſm. St. *Auſtin*, St. *Jerom*, *Pelagius*; *Catholics*, *Heretics* and *Schiſmatics*, were all agreed, and ſubſcribed to that as true. Did it then begin in *Africa*, St. *Auſtin*'s Country, but Two hundred Years before, at moſt, and not in other Places, 'till ſome conſiderable Time after that? If this be ſo, how could St. *Auſtin* and all *Chriſtendom* be ignorant of its Original? Could he not look Two Centuries backward, into the Hiſtory of his own Church and Nation, to inform himſelf better about Matter of Fact; and not take the Liberty to write in the Dark, and talk at Random, to the Shame of his Face, if he publiſhed a Falſhood, and provoke the World to prove him a Lyar? But that he was no Novice in *Greek* and *Latin* Antiquities, his Learned Book *De Civitate Dei*, is alone ſufficient Evidence. And that he was competently ſkill'd in Church Hiſtory, his Tract of Hereſies bears Witneſs. Among which Hereſies, neither he nor *Epiphanius*, nor *Theodoret*, nor *Philaſtrius*, nor any Eccleſiaſtical Writers of thoſe Times, could meet with the ancient, univerſal and long-liv'd Hereſy of the *Antipædobaptiſts*. For, had they found it in any old Author, as Mr. *Gale* fancies that he has done, it is moſt probable, that all, or ſome of them, had inſerted it among Errors and Hereſies, ſince the Practice of Infant-Baptiſm was then thought neceſſary to Salvation.

But all this while, where were the Wits of his acute and ſubtle Adverſaries the *Pelagians*, when they ſuffered him to impoſe on their Underſtandings ſuch a groſs and notorious Falſhood, to the great Prejudice of their Cauſe? To Original Sin they were declared Enemies, and that the Univerſal Church of Chriſt always baptized Infants for the Remiſſion of that Sin, was St. *Auſtin*'s and the Catholics Plea againſt their Hereſy; yet, to the conſtant and univerſal Practice of the Church, in baptizing Infants, the *Pelagians* gave Aſſent, becauſe they found it a manifeſt

Truth;

Truth; but the End, which was Remiſſion of Sin, they denied, and ſubſtituted another in its Room. But their eaſieſt, ſhorteſt, and moſt effectual Method to defend their Error, had been to deny the Matter of Fact about Infant-Baptiſm, and traduce it for a Novel and Corrupt Practice: And ſo, doubtleſs, they would have done, in caſe they could for Fear and Shame. Opportunities and Advantages enough they had for Information, with Heads that were cunning and inquiſitive. Throughout the moſt famous and eminent Parts of *Chriſtendom*, they made their Travels. Their Reſidence they took up in Capital Cities, where was the greateſt Confluence of all ſorts of People. And with the moſt knowing and learned Chriſtians, Greeks and Latins they were very converſant. Yet ſtill could they meet with never a Perſon, and never a Book, that would diſabuſe them, and give them better Intelligence concerning the Antiquity and Univerſality of *Pædobaptiſm*, which the Catholics preſſed them with to overthrow their Error. So that they were forced to acquieſce in that Opinion, and ſhift as they could for another Anſwer to their Adverſaries main Argument againſt them.

Or, was the whole Church itſelf really ignorant of the late Innovation, that was every where introduced among Chriſtian People in the Article of Infant Baptiſm? And could St. *Auſtin* face them down with a naked Untruth in a Caſe ſo very plain? Not above Two Centuries backward had it begun to be practis'd in fooliſh *Africa!* Not above One, or thereabout, in other Churches, when the Doctrine and Practice of the Univerſal Church, as well as the Authority of the Scripture, had been wholly againſt it all the Time before. Could it then ſteal in without their Knowledge, while all Eyes were faſt aſleep? For plain Matter of Fact it was, that concern'd every Chriſtian Soul; an open and publick Practice in all their Congregations. Every Man and Woman among them muſt therefore, in their Time, be ſenſible of the manifeſt Change and Alteration which they ſaw with their Eyes, if they could but diſtinguiſh between an Infant and an Adult Perſon. And when St. *Auſtin* wrote, the Change had been made in the Days of their next, or not far diſtant Predeceſſors. Short Memories, wretched Underſtandings, and poor Records, they muſt all have, if ſuch a Change as this could be ſo ſoon, ſo totally, buried in Darkneſs and Oblivion!

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We grant, that the Lord's Supper was then given to Infants; but were Apostolical Tradition and the Primitive Practice of the universal Church, alledg'd in its behalf? If not, it comes not up to the Case of Infant Baptism; but was a pure Mistake, grounded on a Text of Scripture that was not rightly understood. And what if our Church has, in less Time than half a Century, chang'd the Manner of Baptizing? Neither we nor our Adversaries are ignorant of it. We admitted of the Change as a Thing indifferent; we deny it not, nor do we appeal to former Times, challenging the present Practice to have been the constant and universal Usage; neither are we the whole Church of Christ. Also what new things crept into the Church in those Centuries, and afterwards, in the miserable Reign of Ignorance and Barbarism, when the superstitious Seeds of Popery were sown in God's Field, may be easily enough accounted for, without giving up the brightest Ages of the Church to an unaccountable Dulness and Stupidity.

Should *Antipædobaptists*, to justify their Cause, impudently publish it to the World, that no Infants were ever baptiz'd before the Reformation, there are a hundred thousand could quickly contradict and disprove them. Or should we *Pædobaptists*, for the like End, shamelessly declare in Print, that Baptism was universally administred by Affusion of Water, and not by Immersion, 'till within these last Two hundred Years, there are thousands of *Baptists* would speedily refute and silence us, whatever others might do. We have now therefore some Knowledge and Understanding on all sides; only the Age of St. *Jerom*, St. *Austin*, and the blind *Pelagians*, was wrapp'd up in a *Cimmerian* Darkness, that could not see one or two Centuries behind! Had they been all *Abderitans*, that's worse than *Africans*, they could not well be more senseless.

It is hard to speak out the necessary Result of this; That St. *Austin* shamefully ly'd; the *Pelagians* egregiously play'd the Fools, and betray'd their own Cause; and the whole Christian World were then extremely sottish. And 'till these Rubs be clearly remov'd, I must demur to our Adversaries Account of Infant Baptism, and firmly adhere to its Primitive and Universal Antiquity, as founded upon Apostolical Practice and Authority.

" Much Use is made of the Fathers administring the Eu-
" charist unto Infants. For, if in that they err'd and mis-
" took the Scripture, they might likewise err about Infant

" Bap-

" Baptiſm. So their Authority is clean gone, and we muſt " not build on the Teſtimony of ſuch weak and fallible " Men. " But how does it follow, that thoſe who err in one Thing, muſt err in all Things; and ſhall merit no Credit, where they appear to be right, becauſe they are fallible? If theſe be neceſſary Conſequences, then Mr. *Gale* has vented nothing but Errors throughout his Reflections, and has utterly loſt his Credit. For, as ſure I am, as there is a Sun in the Firmament, he is not right in all Particulars. If theſe Gentlemen would argue like ſound Logicians on this Article, they would not go about to prove, that the Fathers might err, which we deny not; but that they have actually err'd in the Caſe of *Pædobaptiſm*, which is the Point in Queſtion, and only to the Purpoſe. Whereas the Method they now take, is perfectly idle and inconcluſive. The Fathers, ſay they, were fallible Men, who not only might err, but, in ſome Things, have actually err'd: Therefore, they might err in other Things, and, conſequently, deſerve no Credit. This does our Adverſaries poor Service, while we deny, that in the preſent Caſe they have err'd, nor could well do it, when all Circumſtances are conſidered. For the Diſpute is now, not about Right, but Matter of Fact, that was of public Practice and Concernment; whereof the Church could not then be univerſally ignorant. All that this Attempt tends unto, both in the Medium and Concluſion, is only to deſtroy common Faith, by blaſting the Reputation of Mankind.

F I N I S.

ERRATA.

PReface, p. 7. *l.* ult. *the Quotation is from Mr.* Gale's *Lett.* 2. *p.* 85. *p.* 26. *l.* 32. *read* and. *p.* 31. *l.* 16. *r.* the leaſt. *p.* 38. *l.* 21. *r.* 27. *p.* 43. *l.* 11. *for* Thing, *r.* Hinge. *p.* 57. *l.* 29 *r.* incomplete. *p.* 64 *l.* 29. *r.* P. Fagius. *p.* 86. *l.* 17. *r.* miſunderſtood. *p.* 91. *l.* 7. *r.* Proſelyting. *p.* 97. *l.* 15. *r.* Jarmouth. *p.* 115. *l.* 10. *r.* Births *p.* 116. *l.* 18. *for* th. y, *r.* all Perſons *p.* 119. *l.* 14. *after* Baptiſm, *put a* Full Stop. *p.* 121. *l.* 17. *r.* in our. *p.* 129. *l.* 33. *r.* Impudence. *p.* 132. *l.* 4. *r.* to them. *p.* 136. *l.* 2. *r.* I take. 155. *l.* 6. *after* any, *put a* Full Stop. *p.* 157. *l.* 28. *r.* Was Mr. *Gale*. *p.* 158. *l.* 17. *r.* from *Abra-*. *p.* 159. *l.* 14. *r.* viſibly. *p.* 162. *l.* 24. *r.* poſitive Ordinances. *p.* 168. *l.* 16. *r* Word. *p.* 174. *l.* 8 *dele* and *Numb.* ix. 17, &c. *p.* 182. *l* 4. *r* thoſe. Ibid *l* 16. *read* waſhing of Water. Ibid. *l.* 31. *r.* tight. *p.* 195. *l* 13. *r.* the Commiſſions. *p.* 204. *l.* 14. *r.* the Baptiſm. *p.* 206. *l.* 23. *r.* not ſo.